

**ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF
NEEDLEWORK**



THÉRÈSE DE DILLMONT

ENGLISH EDITION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface.....	5
Plain Sewing	7
Mending	19
Single and Cut Open-Work.....	25
Net and Damask Stitches	47
White Embroidery.....	65
Flat Stitch and Gold Embroidery	91
Tapestry and Linen Embroidery.....	105
Knitting	139
Crochet Work.....	177
Tatting.....	243
Macramé.....	259
Netting.....	299
Irish Lace.....	331
Laces of Different Kinds.....	357
Miscellaneous Fancy Work.....	389
Practical Directions	415

Preface

Author's Preface:

The absolute want of any comprehensive book on needlework—such an one as contains both verbal and pictorial descriptions of everything included under the name of needlework—has led me to put into the serviceable form of an Encyclopedia, all the knowledge and experience, which years of unceasing study and practice have enabled me to accumulate on the subject, with the hope that diligent female workers of all ages, may be able, by its means to instruct themselves in every branch of plain and fancy needlework.

All the patterns given, even the most insignificant, were worked afresh for the purpose, and thus, not merely faithful representations, but also lucid and intelligible explanations of the same, are secured.

In order that my readers may have something besides the dull theory, the work is enlivened by a number of useful patterns, some new, some derived from the artistic productions of such countries and epochs as have become famous by special excellence in the domain of needlework.

Though, at first sight, the reproduction of many of these patterns may seem to present insuperable difficulties, they will, after a careful study of the text, and exact attention to the directions given, prove easy to carry out.

Many of these interesting designs are drawn from private collections, whose owners, with great kindness, placed their treasures at my disposal, to copy and borrow from at discretion, for which I desire to take the present opportunity, of tendering them my warmest thanks.

The choice of colours and material—a difficult matter to many—my readers will find rendered comparatively easy to them by the notes affixed to the illustrations; and I may point out, that most of the patterns were worked with D.M.C cottons, which enjoy the well-earned reputation of being, the very best of their kind, in the market of the world.

Experience has convinced me that, in many instances, these cottons may with advantage take the place of wool, linen thread, and even silk.

If this work meet with indulgent judges, and prove really useful, I shall find ample reward in that fact for the trouble and difficulties that have unavoidably attended its completion.

Publisher's Preface:

This volume is an English translation from the French, done in a earlier era. Therefore, the language may seem somewhat stilted to our modern ears. However, we did not want to alter the text significantly, so any traces of this archaic language remain in this newly published edition.

The illustrations have been rendered as well as can be done, considering the quality of the images at our disposal for this publication. Where the quality is lacking, we have tried to provide enlarged images to bring out the detail as much as possible.

We hope you enjoy this large-format, economical edition of a classic work.

Plain Sewing

Many, on opening the Encyclopedia of needlework will be disposed to exclaim as they read the heading of this first section: What is the use of describing all the old well-known stitches, when machines have so nearly superseded the slower process of hand-sewing? To this our reply is that, of all kinds of needlework, Plain Sewing needs to be most thoroughly learned, as being the foundation of all. Those who are able to employ others to work for them, should at least know how to distinguish good work from bad, and those who are in less fortunate circumstances, have to be taught how to work for themselves.

Position of the body and hands.—Before describing different kinds of stitches, a word should be said as to the position of the body and hands when at work. Long experience has convinced me that no kind of needlework necessitates a stooping or cramped attitude. To obviate which, see that your chair and table suit each other in height, and that you so hold your work as hardly to need to bend your head at all. The practice of fastening the work to the knee, besides being ungraceful, is injurious to the health.

Needles.—These should be of the best quality. To test a needle, try to break it; if it resist, and then break clean in two, the steel is good; if it bend without breaking, or break without any resistance, it is bad. Never use a bent needle, it makes ugly and irregular stitches, and see that the eye, whether round or egg-shaped, be well-drilled, that it may not fray or cut the thread. Long or half-long needles are the best for white work, long ones for dress-making, and longer ones still, with long eyes, for darning. A stock of each, from No 5 to 12, is advised. The needle should always be a little thicker than the thread, to make an easy passage for it through the stuff.

To keep needles from rusting, strew a little stone alum in the packets, and workers whose hands are apt to get damp, should have a small box of it handy, to powder their fingers with. Blackened needles can be made quite bright again by drawing them through an emery cushion.

Scissors.—Scissors are a very important accessory of the work-table, and two varieties are indispensable; a pair of large ones for cutting-out, with one point blunt and the other sharp, the latter to be always held downwards; and a pair of smaller ones with two sharp points. The handles should be large and round; if at all tight, they tire and disfigure the hand.

Thimble.—Steel thimbles are the best; bone are very liable to break, and silver ones are not deeply enough pitted, to hold the needle. A thimble should be light, with a rounded top and flat rim.



Fig. 1. Knotting the thread into the needle

The thread.—Except for tacking, your thread should never be more than from 40 to 50 c/m. long. If the thread is in skeins, it does not matter which end you begin with, but if you use reeled cotton, thread your needle with the end that points to the reel, when you cut it; as the other end will split, and unravel, when twisted from left to

right, which is generally done, to facilitate the process of threading. The cotton should always be cut, as it is weakened by breaking.

Knotting the thread into the needle (fig. 1).—When the thread becomes inconveniently short, and you do not want take a fresh one, it may be knotted into the needle, thus: bring it round the forefinger close to the needle, cross it on the inside next to the finger, hold the crossed threads fast, with the thumb draw the needle out through the loop thus formed, and tighten the loop round both ends..

Materials.—For tacking, use Coton à coudre D.M.C qualité supérieure (black and gold stamp) Nos. 2 to 6. For hand-sewing, Fil d'Alsace D.M.C Nos. 30 to 700, and Fil à dentelle D.M.C, balls or reels, Nos. 25 to 100 will be found most useful. For machine-work: Câblé 6 fils pour machines D.M.C, Nos. 30 to 300, black and white, or white and blue stamp. These can also be used for hand-work. Both these and the lace-thread (Fil à dentelle) on reels, are superfine in quality. The medium sizes are the most useful; but the only suitable ones for very fine and delicate fabrics are the Fil à dentelle D.M.C, and Fil d'Alsace, and the latter only is manufactured in the higher numbers.

All these threads are to be had, wound in balls, or on reels, the buyer may make his own choice; balls are apt to get tangled, but the cotton preserves its roundness better than when it is wound on reels. Linen is generally sewn with linen-thread, but Fil à dentelle and the Fil d'Alsace are very good substitutes.

Position of the hands (fig. 2).—The stuff, fastened to a cushion, must be held with the left hand, which should neither rest on the table, nor on the cushion, the needle must be held between the thumb and forefinger, of the right hand, and the middle finger, armed with the thimble, pushes the needle far enough through the stuff, for the other fingers to take hold of it and draw it out; the thread then comes to lie between the fourth and fifth fingers in the form of a loop, which must be tightened gradually to avoid its knotting.

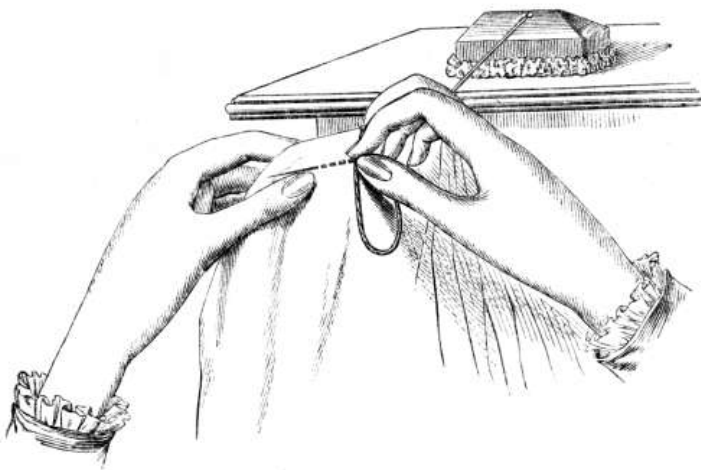
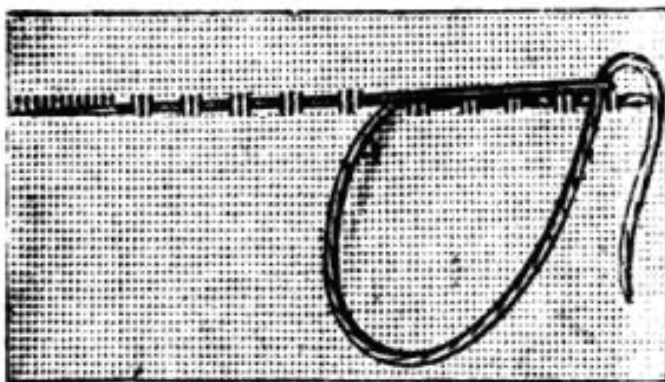
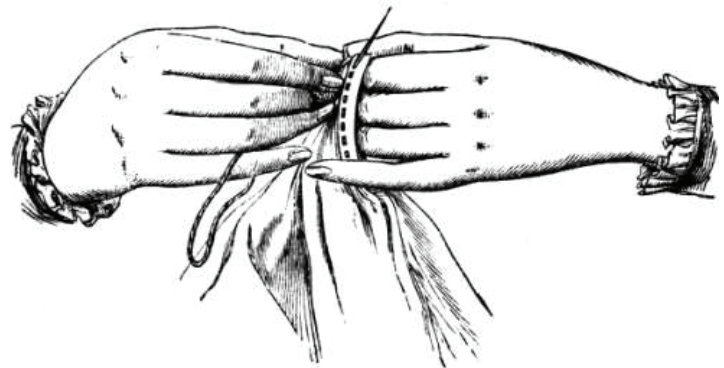


Fig. 2. Position of the hands.

Position of the hands without cushion (fig. 3).—When the work cannot be fastened to a cushion it should be held between the forefinger and the thumb, and left hanging down, over the other fingers. If it need to be more firmly held, draw it between the fourth and fifth fingers, which will prevent it from getting puckered or dragged.

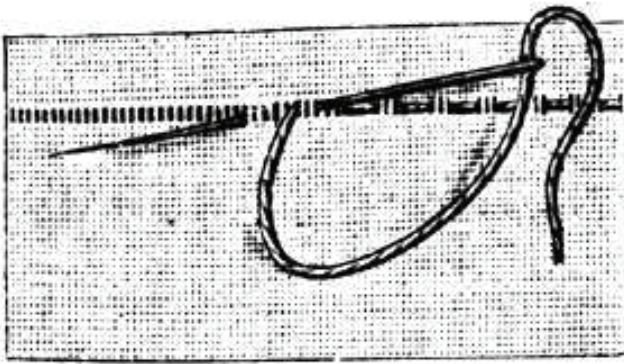
Fig. 3. Position of the hands without cushion.

Stitches.—Plain-Sewing comprises 4 varieties of stitches, (1) running, (2) back-stitching, (3) hemming and (4) top or over-sewing.



(1) **Running-stitch** (fig. 4).—This is the simplest and easiest of all. Pass the needle in and out of the material, at regular intervals, in a horizontal direction, taking up three or four threads at a time. If the stuff allow, several stitches may be taken on the needle at once, before the thread is drawn out. Running-stitch is used for plain seams, for joining light materials, for making gathers and for hems.

Fig. 4. Running-stitch.



(2) **Back-stitch** (fig. 5).—Insert the needle, and draw it out six threads further on, carry your thread back, from left to right, and insert the needle three threads back from the point at which it was last drawn out, and bring it out six threads beyond. Stitching and back-stitching are better and more quickly done by machine than by hand.

Fig. 5. Back-stitch.

constitutes what is called stitching. Only one stitch can be made at a time, and the needle must be put in, exactly at the point where it was drawn out to form the preceding back-stitch, and brought out as many threads further on as were covered by the last back-stitch. The beauty of stitching depends on the uniform length of the stitches, and the straightness of the line formed, to ensure which it is necessary to count the threads for each stitch, and to draw a thread to mark the line. If you have to stitch in a slanting line across the stuff, or the stuff be such as to render the drawing of a thread impossible, a coloured tacking thread should be run in first, to as a guide.

Stitching (fig. 6).—The production of a row of back-stitches, that exactly meet one another, constitutes what is called stitching. Only one stitch can be made at a time, and the needle must be put in, exactly at the point where it was drawn out to form the preceding back-stitch, and brought out as many threads further on as were covered by the last back-stitch. The beauty of stitching depends on the uniform length of the stitches, and the straightness of the line formed, to ensure which it is necessary to count the threads for each stitch, and to draw a thread to mark the line. If you have to stitch in a slanting line across the stuff, or the stuff be such as to render the drawing of a thread impossible, a coloured tacking thread should be run in first, to as a guide.

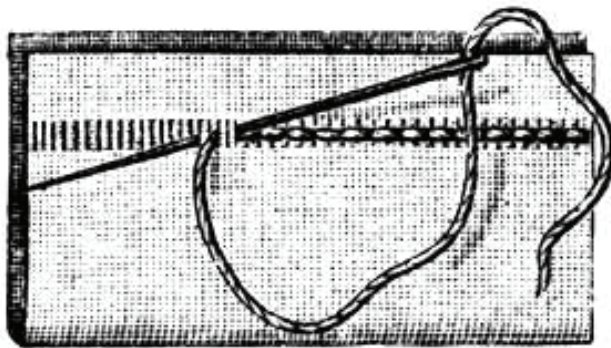


Fig. 6. Stitching.

above the edge of the first turning, and do your stitching through all three layers of stuff; the right side will be that on which you form your stitches.

Stitched hem (fig. 7).—Make a double turning, as for a hem, draw a thread two or three threads above the edge of the first turning, and do your stitching through all three layers of stuff; the right side will be that on which you form your stitches.

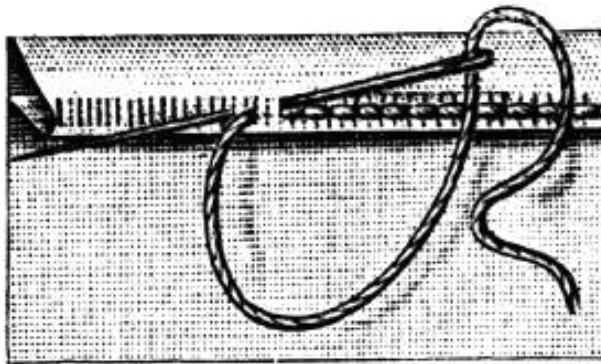
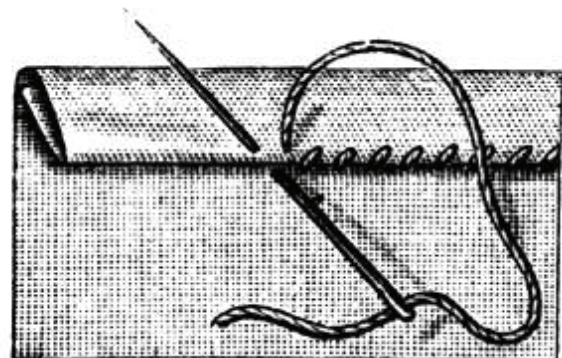


Fig. 7. Stitched hem.

(3) **Hemming-stitch** (fig. 8).—To make a good hem, your stuff must be cut in the line of the thread. Highly dressed stuffs, such as linen and calico; should be rubbed in the hand, to soften them, before the hem is laid. Your first turning should not be more than 2 m/m. wide; turn down the whole length of your hem, and then make the second turning of the same width, so that the raw edge is enclosed between two layers of stuff.

Fig. 8. Hemming-stitch.

Narrow hems do not need to be tacked, but wide ones, where the first turning should only be just wide enough to prevent the edge from fraying, ought always to be. In hemming you insert the needle and thread directed in a slanting position towards you, just below the edge of the hem, and push it out two threads above, and so on to the end, setting the stitches, two or three threads apart, in a continuous straight line. To ensure the hem being straight, a thread may be drawn to mark the line for the second turning, but it is not a

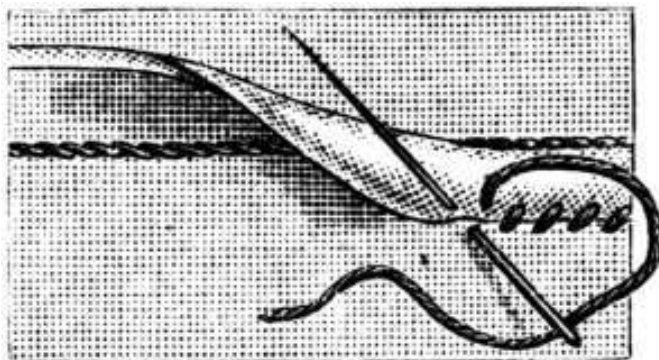


good plan, especially in shirt-making, as the edge of the stuff, too apt in any case, to cut and fray, is, thereby, still further weakened. Hems in woollen materials, which will not take a bend, can only be laid and tacked, bit by bit. In making, what are called rolled hems, the needle must be slipped in, so as only to pierce the first turning, in order that the stitches may not be visible on the outside.

Flat seam (fig. 9).—Lay your two edges, whether straight or slanting, exactly even, tack them together with stitches 2 c/m. long, distant 1 to 2 c/m. from the edge, and then back-stitch them by machine or by hand, following the tacking-thread. Cut off half the inner edge, turn the outer one in, as for a hem and sew it down with hemming-stitches.

Fig. 9. Flat seam.

Smooth the seam underneath with the forefinger as you go, to make it lie quite flat. Beginners should flatten down the seam with their thimbles, or with the handle of the scissors, before they begin to hem, as the outer and wider edge is very apt to get pushed up and bulge over, in the sewing, which hides the stitches.

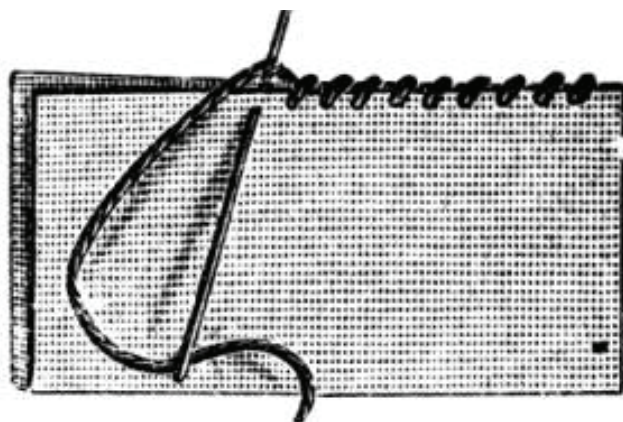


Rounded seam.—Back-stitch your two edges together, as above directed, then cut off the inner edge to a width of four threads, and roll the outer one in, with the left thumb, till the raw edge is quite hidden, hemming as you roll. This kind of seam, on the wrong side, looks like a fine cord, laid on, and is used in making the finer qualities of underclothing.

Fastening threads off, and on (fig. 10).—Knots should be avoided in white work. To fasten on, in hemming, turn the needle backwards with the point up, take one stitch, and stroke and work the end of the thread in, underneath the turning. To fasten on, in back-stitching or running, make one stitch with the new thread, then take both ends and lay them down together to the left, and work over them, so that they wind in, and out of the next few stitches.



Fig. 10. Fastening threads off and on.



(4) **Top or over-sewing stitch** (fig. 11).—This stitch is used for joining selvages together. To keep the two pieces even, it is better, either to tack or pin them together first. Insert the needle, from right to left, under the first thread of the selvedge, and through both edges, and sew from right to left, setting your stitches not more than three threads apart. The thread must not be drawn too tightly, so that when the seam is finished and flattened with the thimble, the selvages may lie, side by side.

Fig. 11. Top or over-sewing stitch.

Another kind of sewing-stitch (fig. 12)—For dress-seams and patching; sew left to right, tacking or pinning the edges together first, and holding them tightly with the thumb and finger, to keep perfectly even.

Macramé

Macramé is an Arabic word, signifying an ornamental fringe or trimming, which has been adopted as the term for a certain kind of hand-work, known also as *knotted fringe* or *Mexican lace* and produced by the knotting, interweaving and tying together of threads.

We have given the preference to the Arabic name because of its less definite meaning, seeing that not only fringe and lace, but trimmings of all kinds, in the shape of bands and stripes and headings, can be worked in macramé.

Until its revival about ten years ago, when it was regarded by many as a new invention, the art of macramé making had for centuries become almost extinct and save here and there in the convents, was quite unknown.

The multitude of uses to which it can be turned as a trimming, the infinite variety it admits of and its great durability and strength, make macramé well worth a study; the difficulties that repel many at first sight are only on the surface and any one who carefully follows the instructions given in the following pages, will soon overcome them and be able without pains to copy the charming designs that accompany them, which remind us of the wooden lattices in the windows of Eastern houses, doubtless familiar to many of our readers, under the name of *moucharabieh*.

Materials.—These may be of almost any kind; silk, gold thread, cord, wool or cotton, can all be employed with good effect. Almost any of the D.M.C cottons can be used for macramé; but the ones especially to be recommended are: Fil à dentelle D.M.C., Cordonnet 6 fils D.M.C. and Coton à broder D.M.C. for the finer kinds of work, and for the coarser, Fil à pointer D.M.C, Coton à tricoter D.M.C. and Ganse turque D.M.C. The twist in all these is so regular as to admit of a high degree of perfection being attained with them: they are moreover very agreeable to the touch, a great recommendation considering how much they have to be handled by the worker.

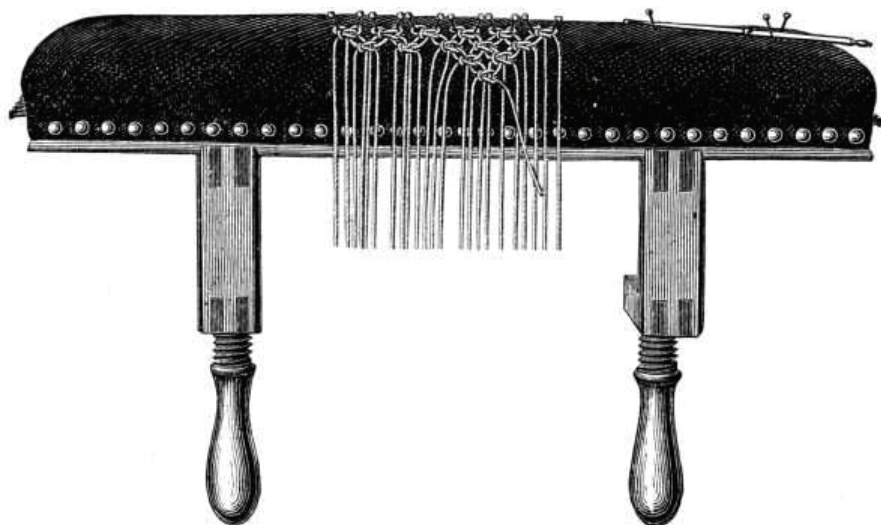


Fig. 513. Macramé cushion.

Macramé cushion and other accessories (figs. 513 and 514).—The only really important requisite for macramé work is the cushion, which should be well stuffed, and weighted with lead (fig. 513). It is convenient to have it made to screw on to a table like the Swiss tambour frames. There are other kinds of macramé cushions but

none, in our opinion, as practical as these because any pattern can be worked upon them and patterns that have a heading or a border of picots can not be worked on any others. The pegs at the ends of the cushion are for fixing and winding the long threads upon, which carry the knots, and which we shall in future call *cords*.

For making long lengths of macramé fringe, metal clamps, with round-headed pegs attached to them top and bottom, to fasten the cords to, as represented in fig. 514, will be found far better than a cushion, as any number of threads can be knotted on to them at a time by pushing them more or less closely together on the cord.

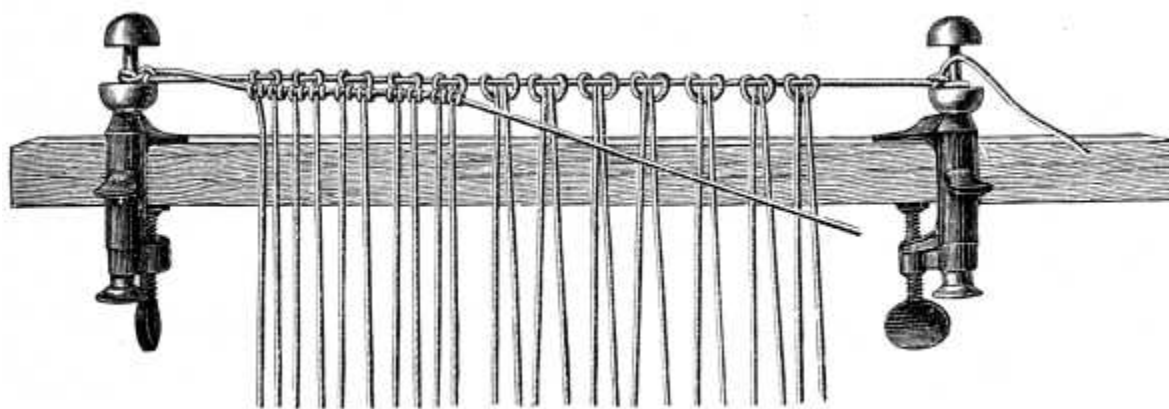
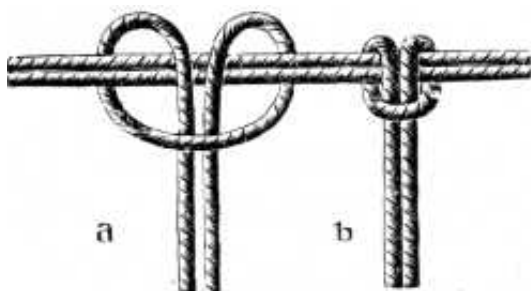


Fig. 514. Clamps for macramé fringe.

Besides the cushion and clamps, you will require, some big glass-headed pins, made expressly for the purpose, a crochet needle for pulling the threads through the stuff when they have to be knotted on to an edge, and a French mètre or yard measure to measure the threads with; to these implements may further be added, scissors and a metal comb and ruler for cutting and straightening the ends of the threads.

The length of the threads must depend on their substance and size; that is to say, that a knot will take up more of a coarse stiff thread than of a fine pliable one, on which account, to avoid the necessity of preliminary trials, the right length of thread, for the quality and size of material, is given with each pattern. If, for any reason, our workers should not follow the directions given, they must bear in mind that the thicker and stiffer the material, the more they will have to allow for the knots and vice versa.



Formation of the knots.—Beginners must be careful, in macramé as in tating, not to move or slacken the cord, or horizontal thread that carries the knots. The knots made by the *knotting-thread*, as it will be called in future, consist of loops formed over the cord and then tightened. The knotting-thread and the cord are constantly changing places, as you work, loops having to be made now with the one and now with the other.

Fig. 515. Knotting on the threads.

Knotting on the threads (fig. 515).—Excepting when you work with the threads of a material obtained by unravelling and drawing out the cross threads, you must knot on lengths of thread on to a cord; cut them double the length the fringe is to be and fold them in half, so as to form a loop by means of which you attach them to the cord, in the following manner. Put the loop over the cord from the front and bring it back underneath, put the ends down through the loop, detail *a*, and tighten it, detail *b*, as shown in the engraving.

Knotting on the threads on to a stuff edge and formation of a flat double knot (fig. 516).—Push your crochet needle through the edge of the stuff from the right to the wrong side and catch hold of the loop, formed by the folding in half of the thread that is to be knotted on; pull it out to the right side, put the ends through, and tighten the loop, detail *a*. Detail *b* shows two double threads, knotted on near to each other in this way, and the first tying together of the two outer threads for the flat knot which is formed as follows: you take the two outer of the four threads hanging down and cross the right hand one under, and the left hand one over the two centre threads. Whilst doing this, hold the inner ones tightly stretched out on the 3rd and 4th fingers of the left hand, detail *b*. The manner in which the two threads are brought back and tied together again is shown in detail *c*; the drawing up of the threads completes the so-called flat double knot, detail *d*. Detail *e*, of the same figure, shows two flat double knots, side by side, and the first step towards the formation of a third, connecting together the two right threads of the one with the two left threads of the other.

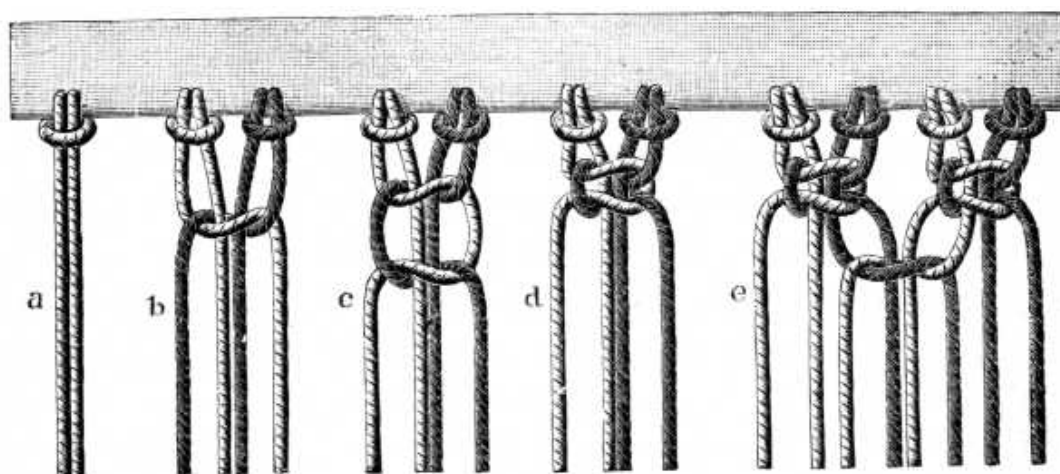


Fig. 516. Knotting on the threads on to a stuff edge and formation of a flat double knot.

Knotting on threads on to a knotted heading (fig. 517).—Make flat double knots as in fig. 516, detail *d*, on a double cord and then knot on your threads on to the loops of the double knots, putting the loop through from the right side, so that it may lie at the back. Use double threads so that the work beneath the heading may not be too open.

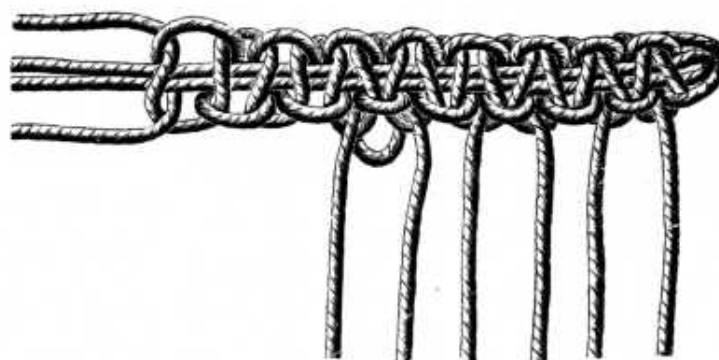


Fig. 517. Knotting on threads onto a knotted heading.

Knotting on threads on to a picot heading (fig. 518)—First, crochet a row of chain stitches, then make flat double knots on the chain, far enough apart for the thread between to form picots on the chain, then a second chain of crochet drawn through the picots on one side, on to which tie triple or quadruple lengths of thread, as shown in the engraving.

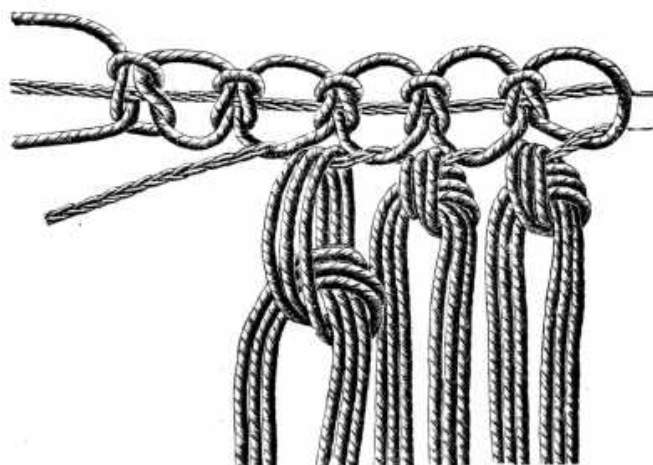


Fig. 518. Knotting on threads on to a picot heading.

Knotting on threads with round picots (fig. 519).—Fasten the lengths of thread to the cushion with pins, about half a c/m. apart, fix the cord to one of the pegs at the left end of the cushion, hold it tightly extended in a horizontal line with the right hand. With the left hand knot the threads that are pinned down on to the cord, looping each end twice round it, upwards from below and then drawing it through between the two loops or knots thus formed, pulling each knot to the left as you tighten it round the cord. Make the second row of knots in the same way, taking care to lay the second cord as close to the first as possible that the vertical threads may

not be visible between. One series of knots forms a bar; there are both horizontal and slanting bars as will be seen later on.

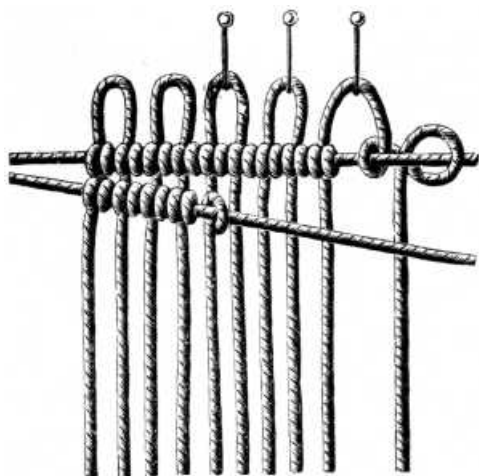


Fig. 519. Knotting on threads with round picots.

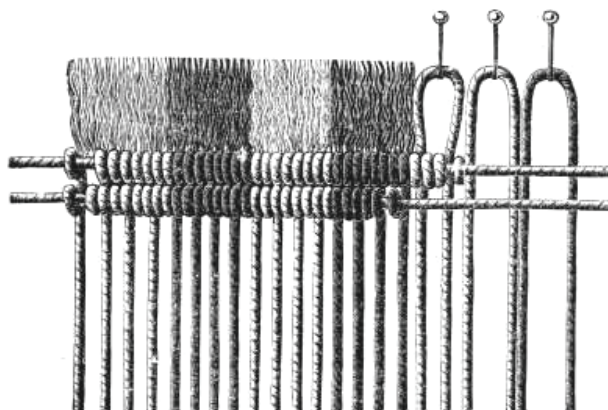


Fig. 520. Knotting on with a fringe heading.

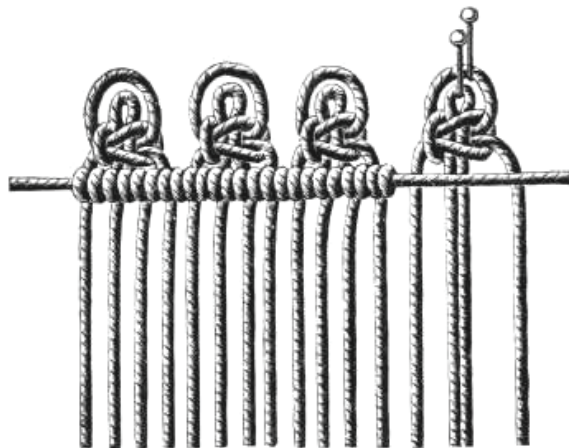
Knotting on threads with a fringe heading (fig. 520).—Knot the threads on with a picot heading, as explained in the preceding figure, then cut the picots through and unravel and comb out the threads.

For this way of knotting on threads, a very strongly twisted material is better than a loose one, as when it is cut and untwisted, it makes a much richer and fuller fringe.

Knotting on with picots and flat double knots (fig. 521). —Take two threads, pin them on close together, make a flat double knot, fig. 516, tying the outer threads over the inner ones, and loop the ends over a cord to make a horizontal bar of knots.

Fig. 521. Knotting on threads with picots and two flat double knots.

Knotting on threads with picots and two flat double knots (figs. 522 and 523).—Pin the two threads on as before and make two flat double knots, one below the other; detail *a* shows the first knot begun, detail *b* the two knots completed. Fig. 523 shows the picots secured by a horizontal bar of knots beneath them.



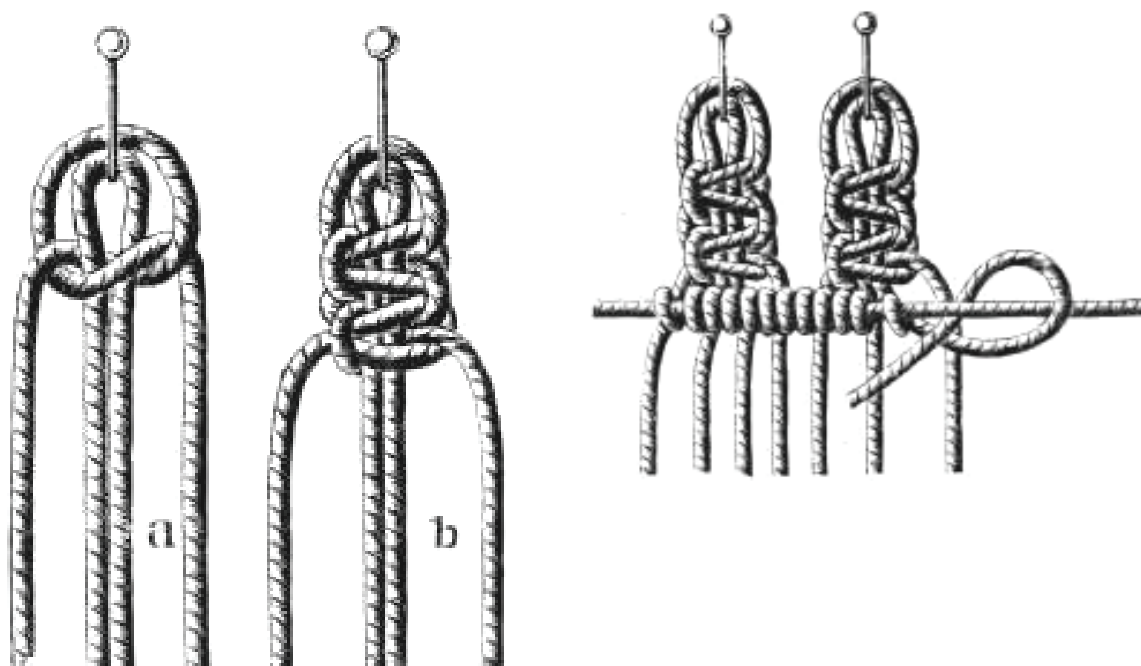


Fig. 522. & fig. 523. knotting on threads with picot and two flat double knots.

Knotting on threads with scallops (fig. 524).—The threads for the scallops must be cut much longer than those that are to be knotted on below them. The buttonhole loops must be so made that they turn upwards; and there must be 12 of them, all made with the left hand thread over the right hand thread, detail *a*. Then, knot on two double threads underneath the scallop and besides, make knots with the threads that come from the scallops, detail *b*.

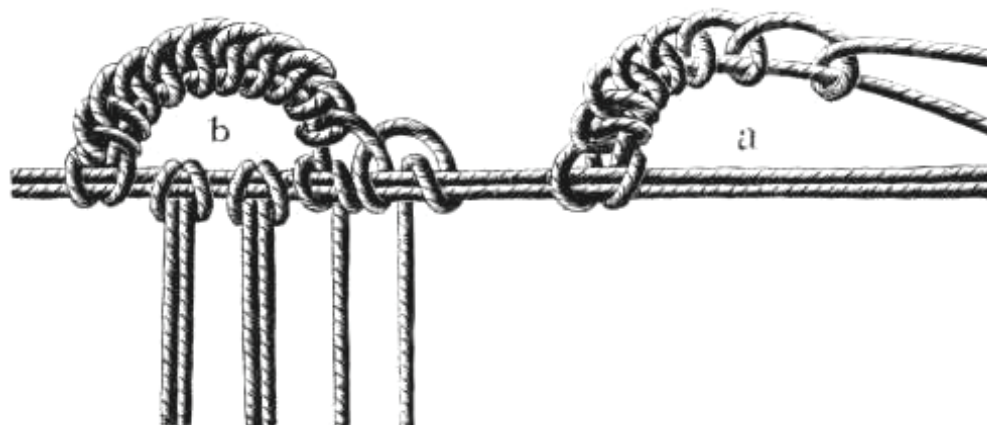


Fig. 524. Knotting on threads with scallops.

Knotting on threads with loops (fig. 525).—Pin on two threads folded in half, a little distance apart, detail *a*, and bind them together with a flat double knot. Pin on more lengths close to them, the inner threads of which are held by a "collecting knot", as the flat double knot is called when it is made over more than two threads (see also fig. 530). The ends of the threads can then be looped over one or two cords, so as to form a single or double bar of knots, as required.

Miscellaneous Fancy Work

As the plan on which this book was constructed rendered a systematic classification of the different subjects it treats of necessary, a certain amount of miscellaneous fancy work, which does not come under any of the previous headings remains to be dealt with in the present chapter. In most cases the illustrations and the accompanying directions are but an application to a practical use of the different kinds of stitches already described in previous chapters and those who are familiar with all these various branches of needlework will have no difficulty in understanding what follows.

Knotted cord (figs. 831, 832, 833, 834, 835).—The knotted cord referred to in the letter press belonging to figs. 772 and 773 in the chapter on Irish lace, comes under the present heading: in making it, the fingers take the place of a crochet needle.

You tie two ends of thread or braid together, take one thread in the left hand fig. 831, and with the forefinger of the right, pull out a loop long enough for the left forefinger to pass through and hold the end of the thread tight with the little finger of the right hand.

Then draw the left forefinger backwards through the loop and behind the thread that is round the loop and lies in the left hand, fig. 832. As you lay the thread round the left forefinger, you must pass the knot and the ends of thread as well, over into the left hand, and with the right hand pull the thread that lies on the right and draw up the loop, fig. 833.

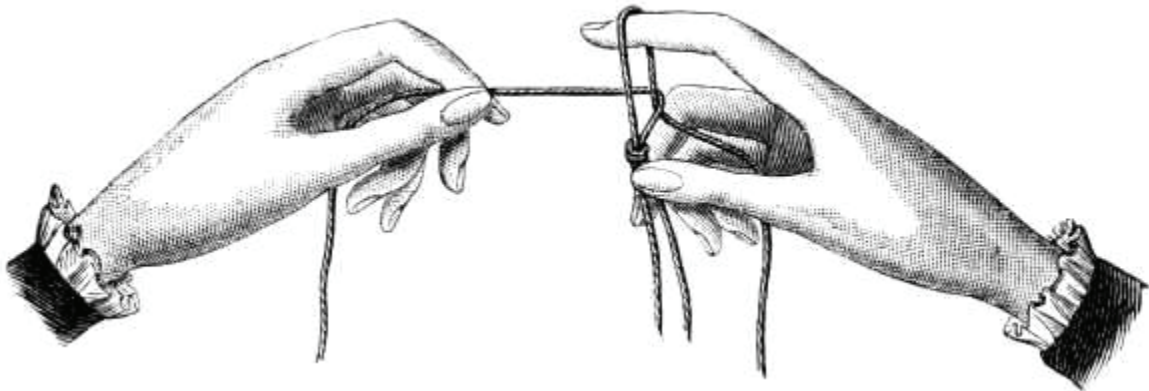


Fig. 831. Knotted cord. First position of the hands.

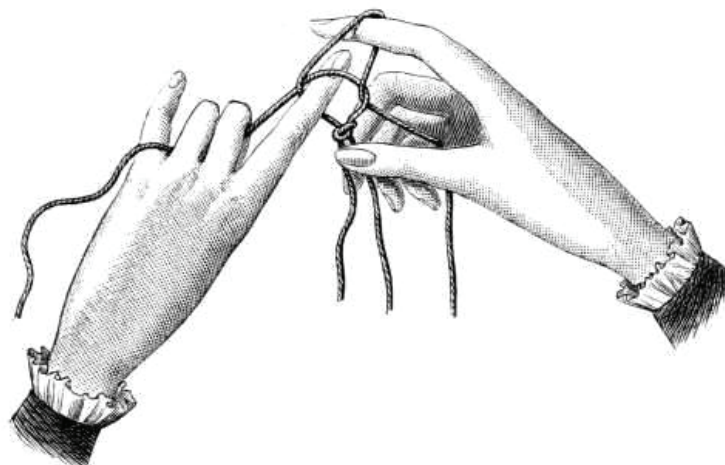


Fig. 832. Knotted cord. Second position of the hands.

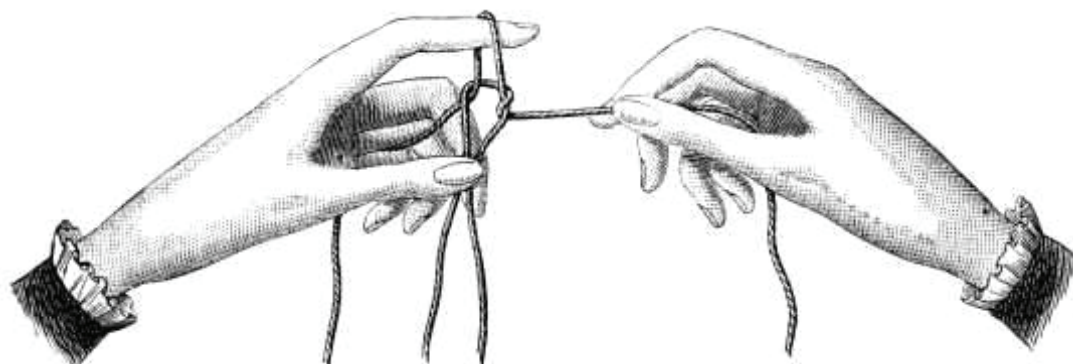


Fig. 833. Knotted cord. Third position of the hands.

In fig. 834, representing the fourth position of the hands, you are shown how the forefinger of the right hand lifts up the thread and passes through the loop on the left hand; the end will consequently also pass immediately into the right hand and the left hand will tighten the knot.

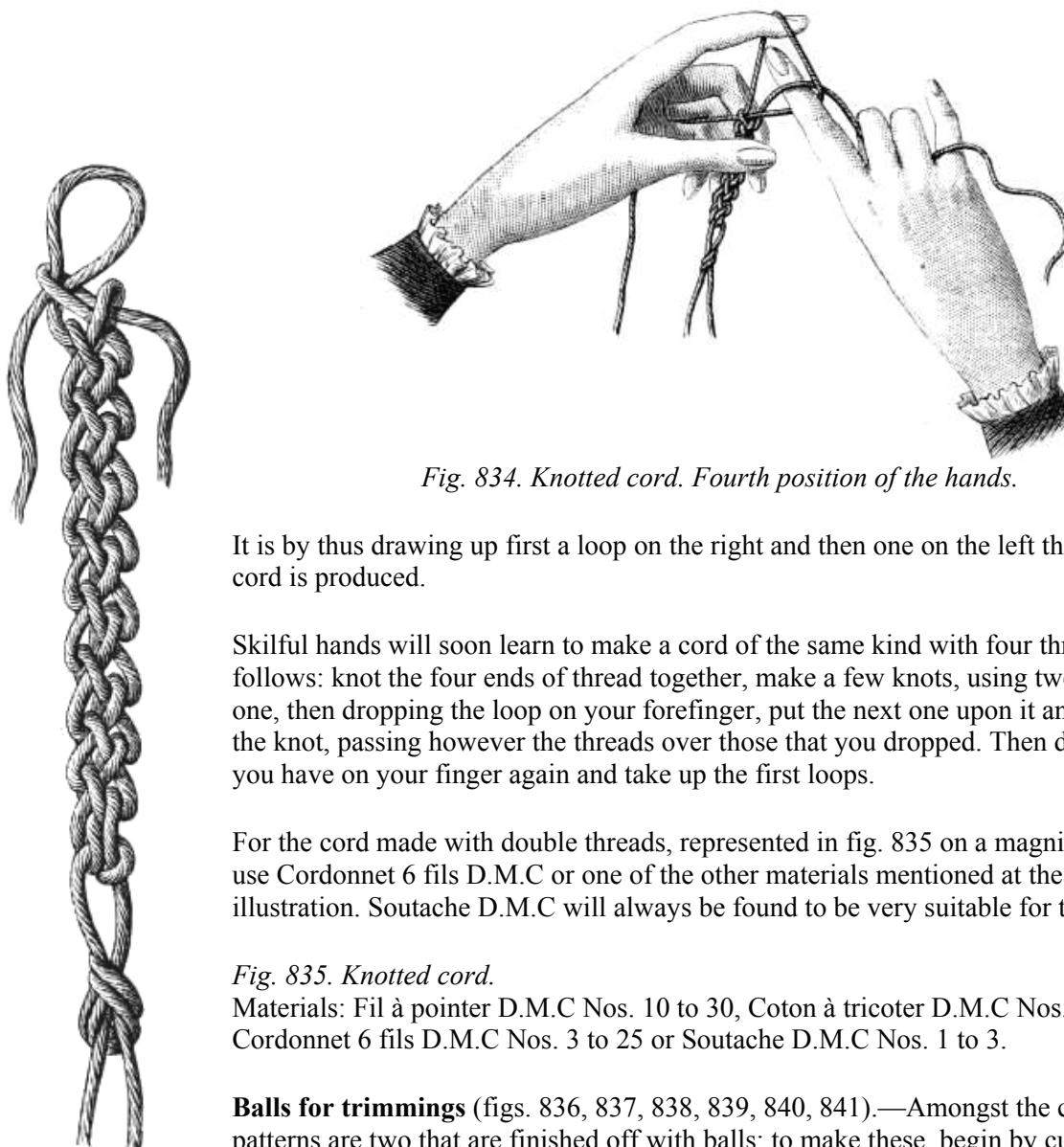


Fig. 834. Knotted cord. Fourth position of the hands.

It is by thus drawing up first a loop on the right and then one on the left that this pretty cord is produced.

Skilful hands will soon learn to make a cord of the same kind with four threads, as follows: knot the four ends of thread together, make a few knots, using two threads as one, then dropping the loop on your forefinger, put the next one upon it and draw up the knot, passing however the threads over those that you dropped. Then drop the loop you have on your finger again and take up the first loops.

For the cord made with double threads, represented in fig. 835 on a magnified scale, use Cordonnet 6 fils D.M.C or one of the other materials mentioned at the foot of the illustration. Soutache D.M.C will always be found to be very suitable for this purpose.

Fig. 835. Knotted cord.

Materials: Fil à pointer D.M.C Nos. 10 to 30, Coton à tricoter D.M.C Nos. 6 to 12, Cordonnet 6 fils D.M.C Nos. 3 to 25 or Soutache D.M.C Nos. 1 to 3.

Balls for trimmings (figs. 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841).—Amongst the crochet patterns are two that are finished off with balls; to make these, begin by cutting a

number of rounds of cardboard, two for every ball, with holes in the middle, fig. 836.

If you have a great many balls to make it is well worth your while providing yourself with a metal die of the proper size, to cut the rounds with.

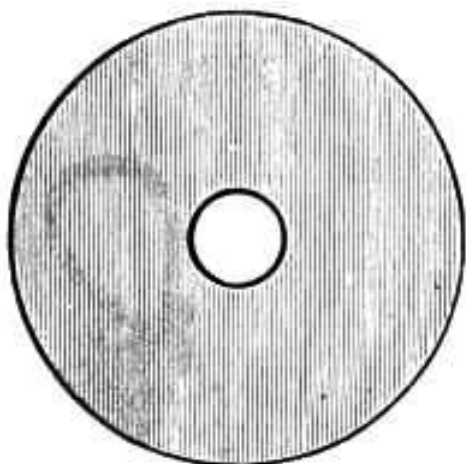


Fig. 836. Balls for trimmings. Circle of cardboard.

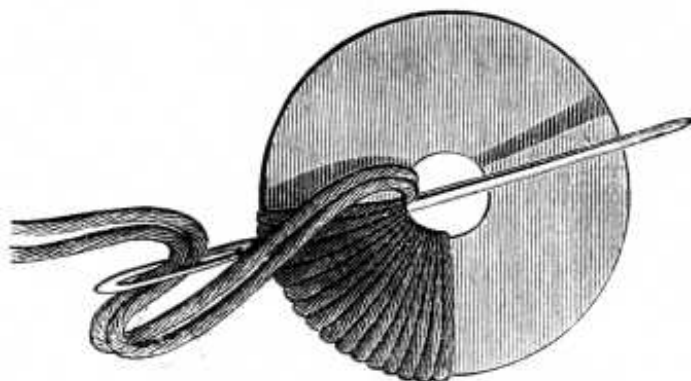


Fig. 837. Balls for trimmings. Overcasting the circle of cardboard.

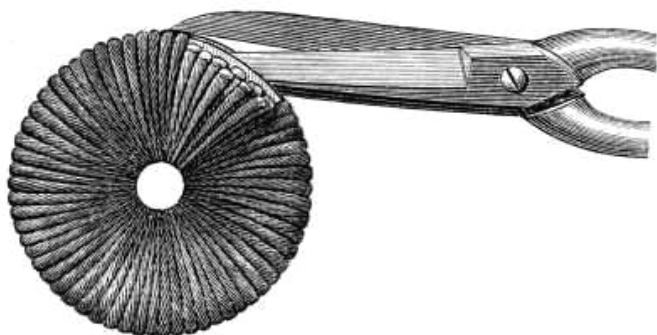


Fig. 838. Balls for trimmings. Cutting the stitches round the edge.



Fig. 839. Balls for trimmings. Putting in the loop.

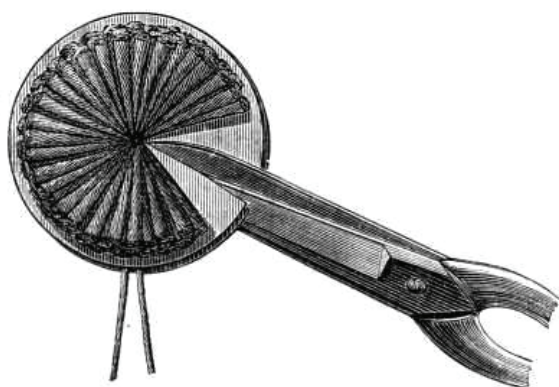


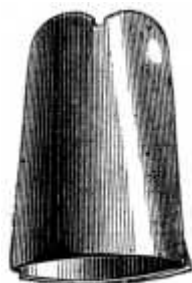
Fig. 840. Balls for trimmings. Cutting out the cardboard.



Fig. 841. Ball completed with loop attached.

Lay two of these rounds together and cover them closely with stitches, fig. 837, using for this purpose Coton à tricoter D.M.C (knitting cotton) or Coton à repriser D.M.C (darning cotton).

When the round is entirely covered, put the scissors in between the two circles of cardboard and cut open the stitches all round the outer edge, fig. 838; then draw a piece of thread between the two circles and knot it firmly round the stitches that meet in the centre hole, fig. 839; leave sufficiently long ends of thread hanging to form a loop by which the ball can afterwards be fastened to the heading of the fringe; when the stitches are knotted together you cut and pull out the cardboard, fig. 840, and snip the thread with your scissors until it becomes quite fluffy and the ball is perfectly round, as shown in fig. 841.



Tambour work (figs. 842, 843, 844, 845).—Since the introduction of the sewing machine, by means of which this charming kind of embroidery can be so quickly and easily executed, it has somewhat gone out of favour. As however, the fine patterns with a good deal of shading in them, can be far more accurately worked by hand than by machine, tambouring, which is in point of fact merely a form of crochet, has lately been revived. The piece of stuff on which the tambour work is to be done must be mounted on a frame.

Fig. 842. Thimble for tambouring.



Fig. 843. Tambour needle.

The loops which are made with a small hook, called a tambour needle, form a fine chain stitch and must be regular and even; to facilitate this a sort of thimble, fig. 842, is worn on the forefinger of the right hand, formed of a small plate of sheet brass, rolled up but not joined, so as to fit any finger; it is open at the top like a tailor's thimble and has a little notch on the side which is placed above the nail, and in which you lay the tambour needle whilst you work. From the thimble being cut slightly slanting at the top, it follows that the inside where the two ends meet is a little shorter than the outside.



The thread is drawn through in a loop to the front of the work by means of the hook, whilst it is held at the back in the left hand, and when the needle is put downwards through the stuff, laid round it. The needle in its downward and upward passage, should be kept in the notch in the thimble and the stuff pressed down with the thimble, as the needle is drawn up to the surface of the work, fig. 844.

Fig. 844. Position of the hands in tambouring.

A little practice is necessary to acquire the right action of the hands, there being always a tendency, the same as in tatting and macramé, to confuse the movements of the two. As soon as you realize that the upward drawing of the needle and the downward pressure of the stuff with the thimble must be simultaneous, you will find that you can work with great rapidity and with admirable results. Thread with a very strong twist, which the hook will not split, is the only suitable kind for tambouring. Of the D.M.C materials, Fil d'Alsace and Fil à dentelle are the most to be recommended.

Numbers of patterns, originally intended for other kinds of embroidery can be executed in tambour work;

amongst those contained in this Encyclopedia, figs. 192, 210, 216, 219, and 227 are the ones that are best adapted to the purpose.



Fig. 845. Drawing out the thread with the needle.

Smyrna stitch worked with a crochet-needle (figs. 846, 847, 848, 849).—In the chapter on tapestry, p. 137 we remarked that Oriental carpets and mats could be worked in different other ways, to be subsequently alluded to at greater length.

Fig. 846. Smyrna stitch worked with a crochet needle. First detail.

Smyrna stitch requires only a crochet needle and is worked on very coarse canvas or Java linen. You take a coarse mesh of cotton, such as Nos. 6, 8 or 10 of Colon à tricoter D.M.C (knitting cotton), cut

it into lengths of 8 c/m., fold two lengths together in half, stick in the crochet needle from above, under two threads of the canvas, take hold of the loop with the hook, fig. 846, and draw it in; then push out the hook to

seize the ends of the cotton and draw them through the loop which is on the needle, as indicated by the little arrow in fig. 847. The stitches or tassels should be two or three double threads of the canvas apart. As you finish each row, comb the ends of the tassels out carefully with a fine metal comb. When the whole piece of work is finished shear the entire surface, quite even, with a pair of sharp scissors. Fig. 849 shows a square of the work completed, presenting that warm velvety appearance which distinguishes the Smyrna carpets.

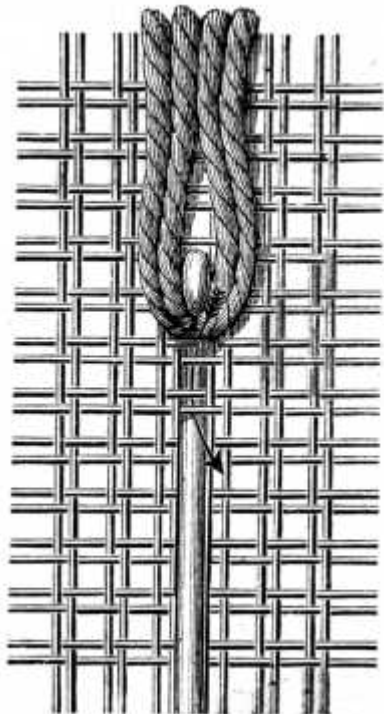


Fig. 846. Smyrna stitch worked with a crochet needle. First detail.

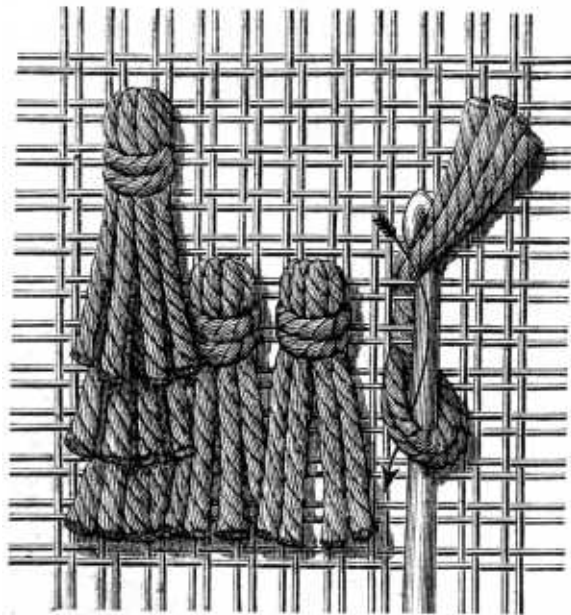


Fig. 847. Smyrna stitch worked with a crochet needle. Second detail.

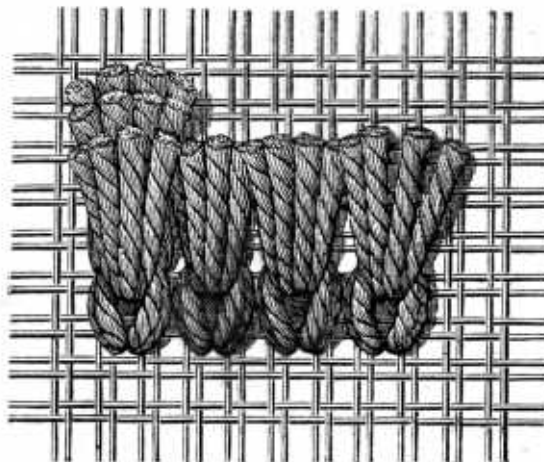


Fig. 848. Smyrna stitch worked with a crochet needle. Appearance of the knots underneath.

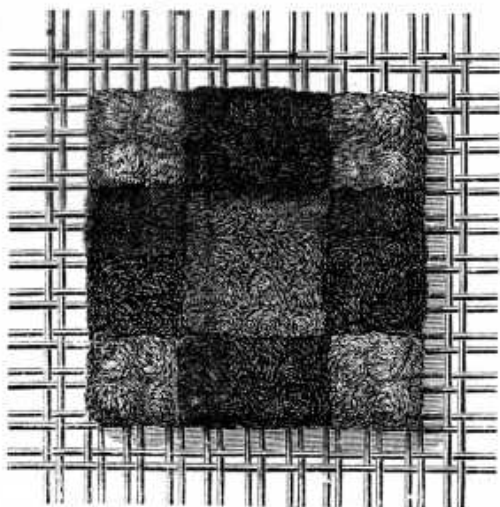


Fig. 849. Smyrna stitch worked with a crochet needle.
Appearance of the work when finished.

Malta stitch (figs. 850, 851, 852, 853, 854).—This stitch is much used by the Maltese; it is the same as the *point tricot* excepting that in the latter, the loops formed by the return of the thread are open and the stitches packed very closely together, whereas in the Maltese work there is always one close loop and two open tassels.

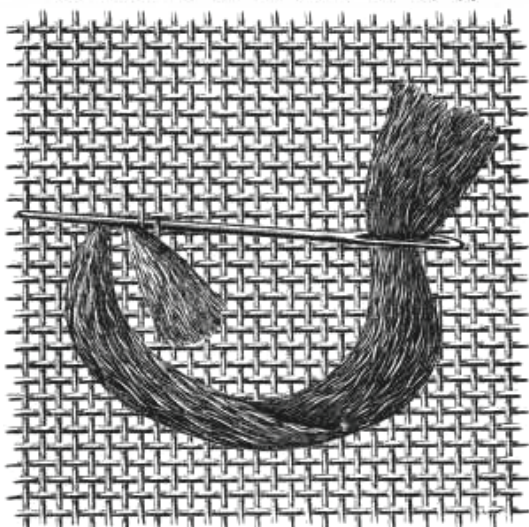


Fig. 850. Malta stitch. First detail.

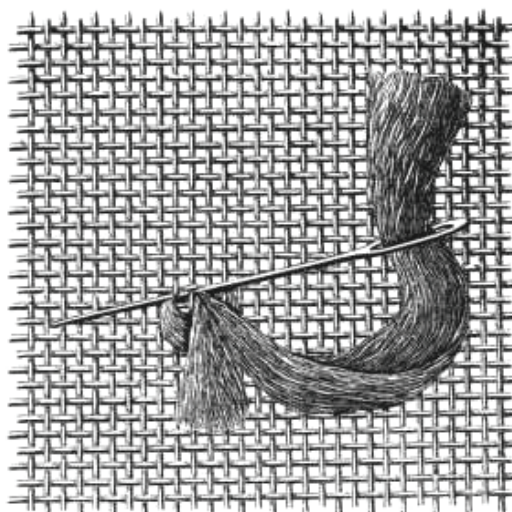


Fig. 851. Malta stitch. Second detail.

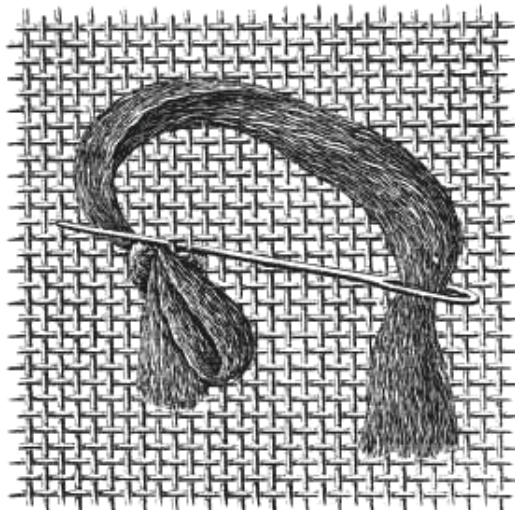


Fig. 852. Malta stitch. Third detail.

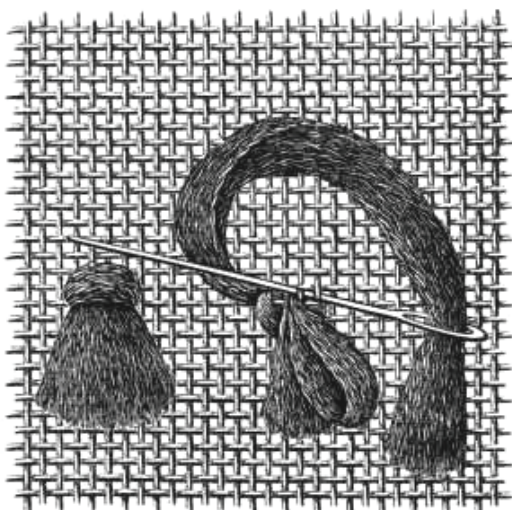


Fig. 853. Malta stitch. Fourth detail.

It is worked as follows: take a thick bunch of lengths of Coton à repriser D.M.C, pass it under two vertical threads of the stuff, from right to left, fig. 850, leaving an end, 1 or 2 c/m. long, lying on the surface of the

work; put the needle in again under the two threads that are in front of the first stitch and leave the tassel, formed by the first stitch, above the one by which you bring the needle back between the two stitches.

The needle must now follow the same course it took for the first stitch and the thread must be drawn out far enough to form a loop as long as the tassel; you then repeat the second stitch, carrying back the working thread however this time above the loop, after which you cut the two open ends the same length as the loop. In the Maltese work, three times as many threads have to be left between the tassels as are covered by the stitch.

Thus if your stitch cover 4 threads of the foundation, you should leave 12 threads between the tassels, and if it cover 6, you should leave an interval of 18 threads, that the stuff may always be visible between the little tassels or balls.

Fig. 854 represents a portion of a curtain, embroidered on Flemish linen in the colours indicated at the foot of the engraving; these may be arranged according to the taste of the worker.

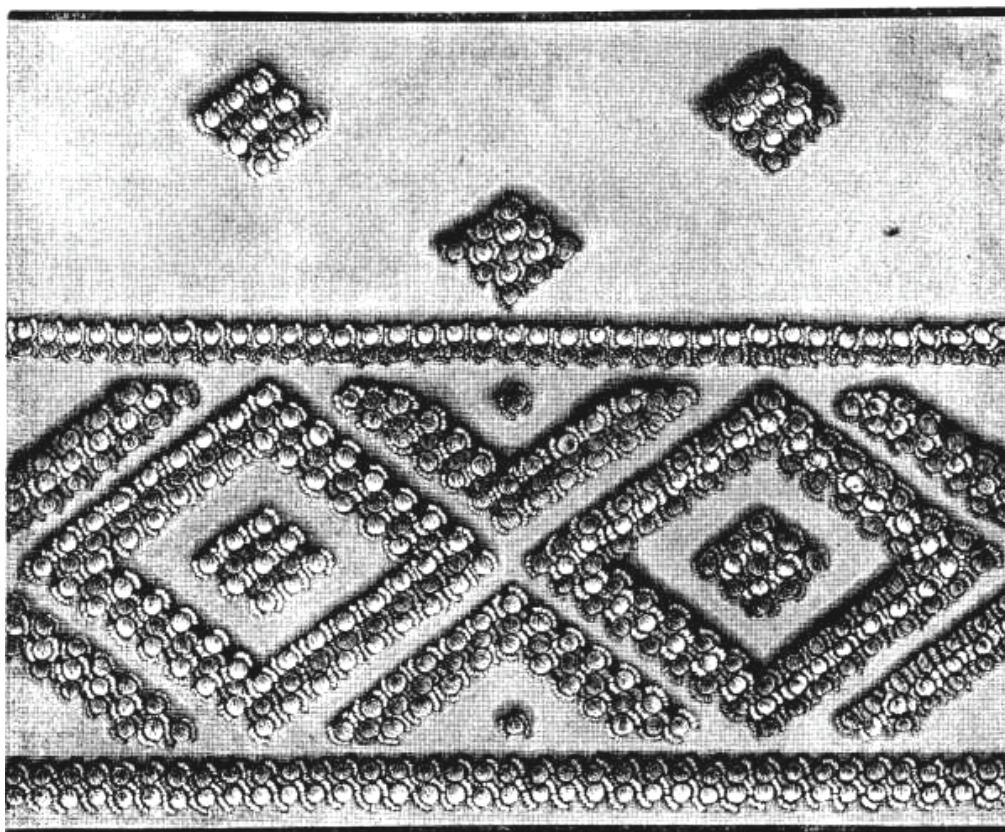


Fig. 854. Malta embroidery.

Materials: Coton à reprise D.M.C No. 25.

Colours: Jaune-vieil-Or 680, Vert-Mousse 469, Bleu-Indigo 311 and Rouge-Cornouille 449.

Malta embroidery is mostly done on coarse coloured linen fabrics or on single thread canvas.

Triangular Turkish stitch (figs. 855, 856, 857, 858, 859). Amongst the many pretty stitches for which Turkish embroideries are distinguished, there is one in particular, which though apparently very difficult, is in reality quite the reverse; it resembles line stitch upon straight threads, only that in the East it is generally worked in diagonal lines, each row requiring two journeys to and fro.

In the first, fig. 855, the needle must always be carried, first over, then under two threads in a diagonal line and so on to the end of the row.