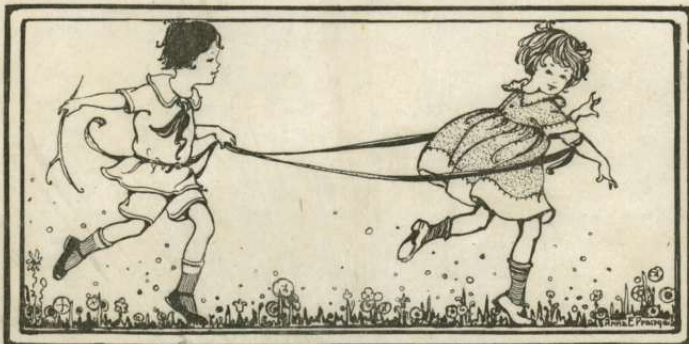


CLOTHES FOR LITTLE FOLKS



IOWA STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND MECHANIC ARTS
EXTENSION SERVICE

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CLOTHES FOR LITTLE FOLKS

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CHILDREN'S clothes exert such a decided influence upon health and happiness that they should have the most thoughtful attention. The individual garments must be suited to the best development of the body, mind and character. Too often style or fashion are followed rather than common sense.

CLOTHING AND CHARACTER.

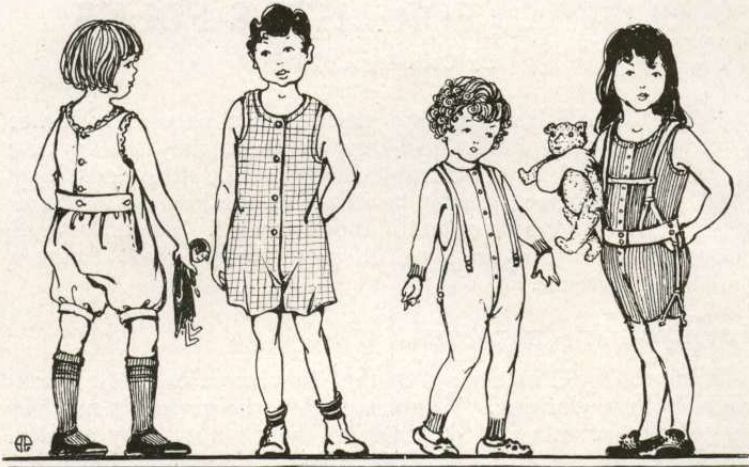
Children should be clothed so that they are absolutely unconscious of their clothing. This means that the garments must be simple, comfortable and of material that is not easily spoiled. A child over-dressed in extravagant, fussy or faddish clothing is apt to think too much about clothes and to become snobbish and affected; one who is oddly or unattractively dressed is self-conscious; one dressed in dirty or ragged clothing is slovenly, and will not have self respect. Adequate, attractive, simple, substantial, clean and comfortable clothes will help to keep the child from being self-conscious, to improve the disposition, to cultivate genuineness, and to establish ideals.

CLOTHING AND HEALTH.

Besides affecting its character, clothing may also have a decided influence on the health of the child. Clothing should be loose and comfortable so that every part of the body may have



Clothes help to make character.



Simple muslin undergarments. Knit undergarments showing reinforcing tapes for supporters and separate supporters used over union suit.

an unrestricted opportunity to work and to grow. Improper clothing may interfere with the circulation, breathing or digestion; it may cause round shoulders, weakened muscles, lame feet, nerves, susceptibility to colds, or displacement of certain organs. Play helps children to develop strong, healthy bodies and clothes should be planned to make wholesome play possible.

TYPE OF GARMENTS.

One-piece or union garments supported from the shoulders will be found preferable to two separate garments. This is true either of under or outer garments. Separate garments are apt to gap, sag or overlap, giving an uneven covering to the body. If there are bands at the waist line they may become tight, restrict the circulation and interfere with digestion. Tight bands or elastic in waists, skirts, trousers, bloomers or rompers may also restrict the circulation and interfere with proper development. A good test for children's garments is that they leave no mark on the body.

UNDERGARMENTS.

Undergarments need even more careful consideration for the child than for the adult. So much energy is necessary for growth that every bit possible must be conserved. First thought should be given to the choice of material from which the garment is made.

Clothing which comes next to the skin must: (1) Help to maintain a constant body temperature; (2) absorb and take care of

the perspiration; (3) give proper ventilation to the skin; (4) be readily cleaned.

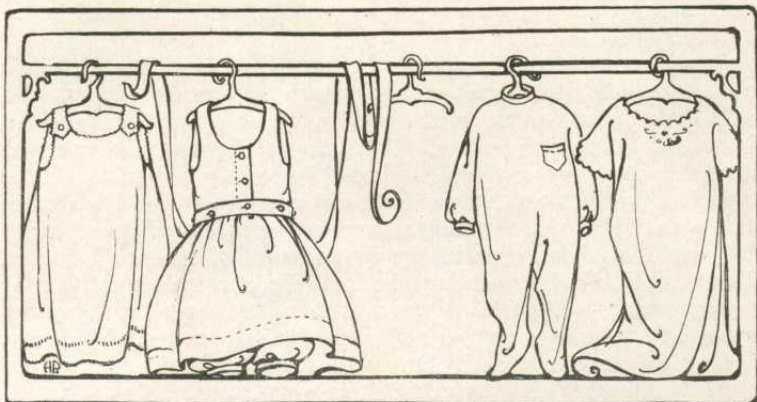
Experiments have shown that the warmth of a garment depends not so much upon the fiber from which it is made,—wool, silk, cotton or linen,—as upon the way in which the fiber is treated in manufacturing processes. The material for an undergarment need not be heavy or thick; it should be loosely woven. Still air is a poor conductor of heat and the air which is held in the meshes of the material of an undergarment is warm, gives opportunity for ventilation and aids in the evaporation of the perspiration. This desirable loose mesh may be had either in loosely knitted or loosely woven materials. Cotton is now the generally accepted material for underwear for both summer and winter. Wool was formerly considered desirable because its curly fibers produce soft, open meshes and absorb moisture very readily. Wool has an additional feeling of warmth, due to its irritating effect on the skin. It takes up body secretions rapidly, but it is difficult to launder, for the garments cannot be sterilized without shrinking and when wool shrinks it loses all of its desirable qualities. Cotton is readily cleansed, is inexpensive and is a good choice for undergarments for all except invalids and inactive people. Silk is too expensive for general use, altho when laundered with care it makes satisfactory garments. Linen makes ideal summer garments, since the fiber is smooth and cool.

Remember in this connection that too much clothing is quite as serious as too little. Too much clothing, especially on an active child, causes perspiration and as a result there is a great likelihood of catching cold.

The undergarment is best made as a union garment, whether it is knit or made of muslin. Union garments for children are now made with reinforcing tapes at the sides to which hose supporters may be attached. There are a number of simple patterns for combination muslin undergarments. Some of these also have the reinforcing tapes.

HOSE SUPPORTERS.

Select hose supporters carefully. They should always hang from or be supported from the shoulders and the pull should come towards the neck rather than the shoulder. If the strain is on the shoulder, round shoulders are likely to result. There are several varieties of hose supporters, the one that is separate and hangs from the shoulder, and the type that is fastened to the side of a waist or undergarment, with a shoulder support. Supporters should never be attached to the front of the waist. In fastening supporters to the hose, be sure that one clasp is towards the front of the stocking and one towards the back, to equalize the strain. Should the elastic wear out, replace with new, for there is no worth in a supporter lacking elasticity. Do not use band garters.



Under garments should hang from the shoulder.
Night garments should give comfort and protection.

SLEEPING GARMENTS.

Sleeping garments are better made as one-piece pajamas with feet attached for winter. These keep the child entirely covered and are a better protection. They may be made of cotton flannel, flannelette, muslin, French or wash flannel. For summer the same type of garment, without feet and made of a thinner material, may be used. A simple night dress or night shirt may also be used. This may be made as a kimona type or with raglan or sewed-in sleeves. For summer garments, thinner muslin, cambric, nainsook, long cloth or lawn are good.

BLOOMERS.

For girls, bloomers of black sateen or of the same material and color as the dress are now often used. They take the place of panties and underskirt, reduce the amount of clothing needed, reduce the amount of laundry and at the same time give protection and a well-dressed appearance. If bloomers are worn, use comfortable bands around the waist and knees, rather than elastic. If petticoats are used, they are better made as a slip hanging from the shoulder. If panties or bloomers and underskirt are both to be used, they may both be buttoned to a single waist.

STOCKINGS.

Purchase a standard grade of ribbed stockings, as a good quality will usually wear longer and keep their color better than the less expensive variety. In size, buy the stockings sufficiently long in the foot and if outgrown, discard. In color they may match the shoes, or with younger children, very often white hose or hose matching the dress are worn with black shoes or slippers.

Short socks should not be used unless the weather is such that the child could comfortably go without shoes and stockings. The growing body needs protection, particularly at the joints where natural protection is lacking. It is a grave mistake to allow a child for fashion's sake to wear half hose in cold weather.

SHOES.

Shoes will need special thought and care. Purchase a good quality. Be sure that they fit the feet. This means that the inside line of the sole should be straight, that the heel and instep should fit snugly, that there is sufficient room for the toes and that they are one-half to three-fourths inches longer than the great toe. The soles should be substantial. Properly fitted, good quality shoes will wear longer and will also encourage correct habits of standing and walking. Some physicians advise the use of high laced shoes for children learning to walk and also for use during the earlier years. The laced shoes give a better opportunity for adjustment than buttoned ones.

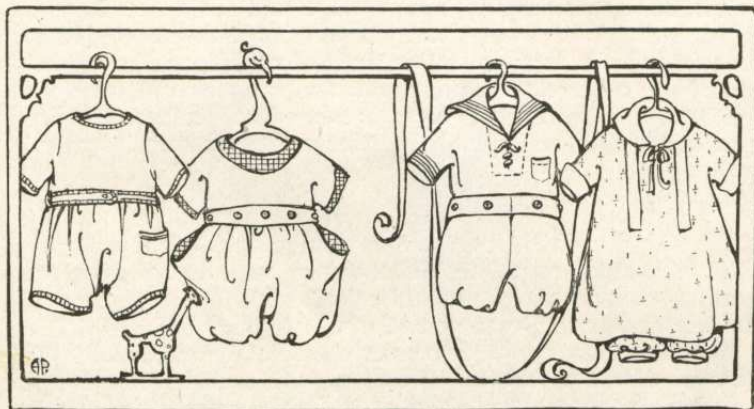


Shoes should fit the feet.

OUTER GARMENTS.

When it comes to outer garments, these should be:

1. Simple: (a) easily made; (b) readily laundered.
2. Suitable: (a) to age; (b) to coloring; (c) to figure; (d) to use.
3. Serviceable: (a) material; (b) color; (c) style.



Rompers, dresses and suits are planned especially for the small boy and small girl.



School garments should be simple. Aprons and overalls protect clothing at play.

Until recently there has not been a radical difference between the garments of boys and girls. Now, beginning even in infancy, we find the difference creeping in. The baby boy's dresses are plain and without trimming. In the romper stage the difference is more noticeable, and after that stage there is no question that the garments are typically masculine and feminine.

Whether the garments are for boys or girls, there are certain things to be kept in mind. The garments are better when made from as few pieces as possible and with simple trimmings, as they are more quickly and easily made and more readily laundered. The material and color should be durable, for children's garments receive hard wear. Heavy gingham, kindergarten cloth, galatea, devonshire cloth, poplin, chambray, linen, crepe, linene, unbleached muslin, romper cloth and Indian head are satisfactory for all-around wear. If woolen garments are desired for winter wear, they are better made of wash flannel or material containing a large percentage of cotton, as they will wash with less danger of shrinkage. Keep in mind that children's clothing gets badly soiled and must be laundered often to keep it hygienic.

COLOR.

When it comes to color, use something besides the every-day pink, blue and brown. In childhood we have the glowing complexion, the sparkling eyes and colorful hair. Besides, there is the happiness and joyousness of youth to be considered. There is, therefore, a very much greater choice of color possible. The tints of all colors, chosen, of course, with consideration for the coloring of the individual child, are suitable; some of the brighter, purer colors may also be used. The fair-complexioned, golden-

haired, blue-eyed child may wear almost any color. The child with olive skin, brown hair and brown eyes has not such an extensive choice, but there are lovely things in cream, yellow, orange, brown, red and red violets for her. The child with auburn hair, a clear complexion and blue or brown eyes may choose from the browns, dull oranges, greens and green blues. A wonderful selection of color is now offered in Japanese crepes, Indian head, gingham and organdies, and these colors should be used.

Color has a distinct effect on the disposition. One little girl said, "Oh, mother, I always want to wear pink! It makes me feel so happy!" Psychologists are making a definite study as to the effect of the different colors. It may be that from them we may learn much about the effect of color on the developing disposition.

STYLE.

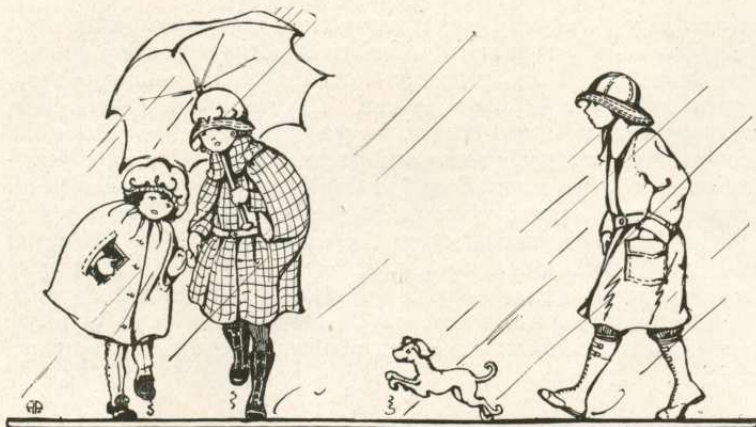
In choosing the style or type of garments, the build of the individual child will need to be kept in mind. As with adults, the vertical lines add height and will make the roly-poly child appear less round, while the horizontal lines will help to make the thin, angular child appear less slim and tall. The straight one-piece dress with bloomers will be good for the former type, while the smock type, with fullness over the chest and shoulders and flare to the skirt, will be a good choice for the latter. With boys there is not quite the same opportunity to conceal the lines of the figure; still, suits of all one color or material will not so much emphasize stoutness, while peg-top knickers or trousers will add somewhat to the apparent size of the thin child.

CONSTRUCTION HINTS.

In constructing the garments, there are certain things to be kept in mind. Sleeves of the set-in variety must be carefully adjusted. They



Out of door wraps simple, attractive, comfortable.



A rain outfit protects clothes and health.

should be loose and well fitted to permit freedom in exercise without danger of rips and tears. The raglan sleeve is satisfactory and usually wears somewhat better than the kimona sleeve. The kimona sleeve, well curved at the under arm, strengthened by the use of gussets, double stitching or tape sewed in to reinforce the seam, or with a seam over the shoulder, is attractive and will give good service. One improperly cut tears readily and necessitates much mending. Tight neck bands should be avoided. All articles of clothing, undergarments, panties, bloomers, trousers should be sufficiently deep in the crotch to insure comfort. If this care is not taken, not only annoyance, irritation and discomfort will be the result, but habits may be established which will eventually undermine the health and morals. Mothers cannot be too careful in avoiding these dangers.

Aprons will want to have a place among the garments in the girls' clothing and to fill this same need for boys, we have the overall and the coverall. Aprons may be used as a protection for the dress at work or play, as a garment in place of the dress, or they may be used over the dress at school to add daintiness and freshness. There are many clever types of aprons from which to choose. Overalls or coveralls are splendid play and work garments for boys.

SWEATERS.

Both girls and boys will need a sweater to use as a wrap on cool days and to use at play. The sweater may also be used on cold days as additional protection under the coat or cloak.

COATS.

Coat and cloak should be simple and plain in design and material. The material should be of rough surface and closely woven, so that the wind will not penetrate. In planning clothing, remember that most houses, public buildings and conveyances are heated, so that the clothing must not be too heavy, with the exception of the outer wrapping, which must give the necessary out-of-door protection. In considering

outer wrappings, do not forget leggings, mittens, scarfs and overshoes. Since two light garments give more warmth than one heavy one, on account of the layer of still air held between them, it is desirable to use a sweater under the coat on very cold days. If the child is still young enough to wear the sweater suits, be sure to add an outside coat on cold or windy days. The wind very quickly penetrates the open meshes of a knit garment.

HATS.

Hats or caps should be very simple in design. Little trimming is used, nothing more than a ribbon band and streamers, or, in the case of girls, a few flowers. In choosing straw hats, get a soft braid that will not chip and lose its shape. For winter a good quality of felt, velour or beaver, a soft velvet or braid hat, or a soft tam, will give good service. Children's hats, particularly those for winter, may be bright in color.

RAIN OUTFIT.

It is not only advisable but economical to provide the child with a rain outfit. This should consist of rubberized or cravenette coat or cape, hat or cap, rubbers and umbrella. This outfit will soon pay for itself in the protection it affords the clothing, even if health is not considered. A satisfactory outfit may often be made from a discarded adult coat or cape. Use lapped seams, stitch with a fine needle and, if necessary, tape the seams with adhesive.

REMODELED GARMENTS.

Nowhere are there so many possibilities in remodeling as in children's garments. But even here care must be taken that the material is suitable and worth the labor of remaking. Very often adult garments are of material too old in color and weave for children's garments. Part of this difficulty may be overcome by the use of a bit of brighter color in braid or a few hand or machine stitches.

Finally, in planning garments for your children, keep them simple, make them in a style suited to the type of figure, use becoming colors, clothe them sufficiently warmly for the cold weather and cool enough for warm weather. Be sure that the garments fit. Have the quality such that they will give compensatory service for the work expended. Suitably dressed children are unconscious of their clothing, and have a better opportunity for normal development.

