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Sunfast and Tubfast Materials

By
Pearl Apland, '22

No longer does the unfortunate child have to wear crude reds, dirty blues, and billious browns just because these are the only fast colors to be had in strong, ever-wearing cloth. During the war the dye stuffs on the market were very unsatisfactory but after a period of experimentation, the American dye manufacturers are now able to produce a wide range of pleasing fast colors in good cotton materials.

A great deal of the credit for these good colors should go to some of our leading designers for their influence in securing for the market a greater variety of pleasing colors which are indeed an improvement on the many crude ones that have been, and still are, found in the average community store.

The big problem of the mother has not always been what color to get, but how to get it in a serviceable fabric. Too often she may have purchased a lovely soft green only to have it wash out gray. Or she may have selected a beautiful lavender which faded to a pitiful drab color when exposed to sunlight.

Clothes will get soiled and children must have fresh air and sunshine. No wonder the average mother has resorted to the ugly blues and reds which have proven to be the most durable. But this is no longer necessary. Lovely fast colors now procurable in cotton materials. The most fastidious mother can be satisfied for the new colors now obtainable are not only absolutely sunfast and tubfast, but are also to be had in a variety of materials and textures. These can be grouped into three general classes.

In the first class are found the heavier or suiting type of fabrics such as the Indian heads, beach cloths, suiting materials and ratinies. Most of these are dyed in the cloth, one or two being yarn dyed. What could be more practical for play frocks than a firm durable weave that does not require any special or careful laundering? And what can be more satisfying than a dress that has the capacity for service without having to sacrifice good looks?

The next group includes the finely woven French and tissue gingham. These can be obtained in stripes, checks and plaids, as well as in the plain colors. They also are yarn dyed.

The printed materials such as the percales and English prints form the third group. They are especially attractive and can be had in a variety of designs.

All of these materials mentioned come in a range of from ten to thirty-five colors and can be purchased at reasonable prices. The suitings are around $3.50 a yard while the gingham cost all the way from $.35 to $.50 a yard, depending on the quality. The percales are cheaper and the English prints are more expensive. The colors are guaranteed by the different manufacturers to be absolutely sunfast and tubfast so that if a dealer is unwilling to stand back of his goods it is safe to say that he does not have the genuine article.

The mother of today who makes her children’s clothing is doubly fortunate for, besides being able to get a wide range of serviceable materials, she can also buy lovely novelty braids, bias bindings, and trimmings of all kinds and colors. Thus she is able to secure any number of good color harmonies that she may choose to use.

The bias tapes which are not new by any means can be procured in new variety: checks, checks with plain piping, the plain colors with either a scalloped edge or an embroidery design of contrasting colors.

The rick racks too, have many new colors and widths. They can be worked up effectively by putting together rows of different harmonizing colors, by combining various widths of the same color by contrasting colors in different proportions. Then too, they may be combined with bias tape or with stitchery to form attractive designs. But the trimmings that please the children are the nursery braids with animal and figure designs which are especially acceptable for romper suits and aprons. There are a number of new edges on the market known as tatting edges, made in many widths and colors. They are especially attractive and dainty as finishes for the finer gingham and percales.

The play frock should be so constructed as to allow the child all the freedom of movement which he requires. So, for this type of garment, it is not wise to use a trimming that is likely to ravel, snag, or fray. Stitchery either alone or in combination with plain braids is always good and need not be elaborate to be pleasing. The Extension Service of Iowa State College issues a pamphlet on “Decorative Stitches and Handmade Trimmings” which shows a number of good variations of the simple stitches most commonly used. This may be had on request.

The apron bag may yield any number of little bits of colored yarn, braid, scraps of materials or braids so that the decorations on little frocks need not always be an added expense.