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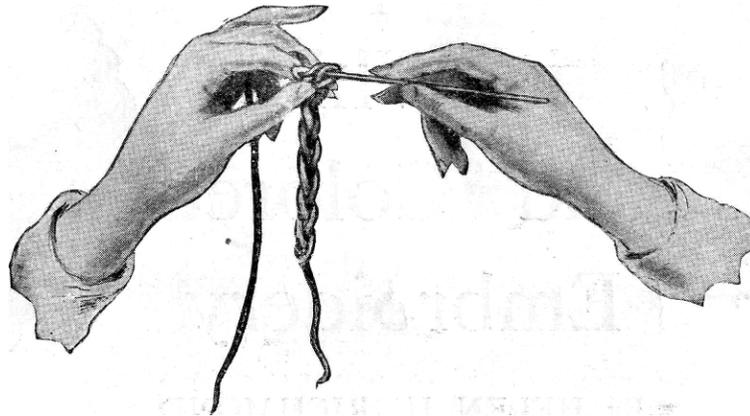
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No. 9



A LESSON IN CROCHET

By EMMA CHALMERS MONROE



ALTHOUGH the art of crocheting is of comparatively ancient date, it having been known in Europe in the sixteenth century, it was then practised chiefly in nunneries, and was indifferently classed with embroidery and laces as "nuns work." After it was brought to Ireland, it attained to a considerable degree of perfection under the name of Irish point, the patterns for working being evidently taken from the needlepoint laces. It was known in England and Scotland, but never attracted much attention until about the year when it became fashionable, and since then it has taken a prominent position which it seems likely to hold. The word *crochet* is derived from the French *croches* or *croc*, and Old Danish *krooke*, signifying hook.

So much for an accredited history of *crochet-work*, as done in the "old world." It was brought to this country - or first became generally known here - about seventy years ago. A lady who is an expert in the art gave the writer an interesting story of her first experience with it. She was a child of ten or twelve years, when one day a schoolmate who had just returned from a visit to New York - a wonderful trip in those days - was displaying her knowledge of a new work she had learned there. She had no *crochet-hook* - which she said should be used - but showed how chain was made by pulling one loop through another with her fingers, using a very coarse thread or twine. My ingenious little friend caught the idea at once, and when she went home she made a hook by bending a pin and fastening it to a bit of wood that served as a handle. A little later a visitor at the house, who was making "tidies" in the new work, showed her how to do other stitches - the double, treble, and so on, although she did not name them - and the little girl with her improvised hook produced a collar which she sold at a most encouraging price. About this time Godey's *Lady's Book*, the accepted authority on fancy work in those days, gave an illustrated description of the various fundamental stitches, with some ideas on how to use them, and this small crocheter was fairly started on the path toward perfection in the art which so interested - and interests - her. Probably no woman in this country has done more of such work than she.

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All this relates to plain or "simple" crochet, which is well adapted to the wants of every-day life, goes on our historian, as it requires little skill in execution, will resist wear and tear, and costs a comparative trifle for materials. The finer kinds, known as Irish point, raised rose-crochet and Honiton crochet, though costing little for material, require greater skill and patience, and are chiefly made for trade pin-poses by the peasantry of European countries, notably, perhaps, Ireland.

Irish point - or Irish crochet, as it is better known here - consists of separate motifs, which are first made and then joined by means of a filling-stitch - usually after having been basted to a pattern. Until perhaps twenty-five years ago all of this class of work seen here was imported; then our American workers began to wonder why they could not make it, and since that time it has been undertaken more and more. There are other interesting variations of the art which will be taken up as we go on; but, after all, plain crochet is easily the favorite.

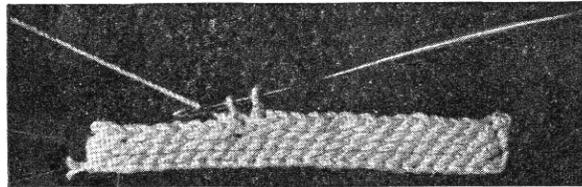
The same stitches are used for all, and it seems a pity that the terms used, or names given the stitches, should not be the same in all publications. The fact that they are not results in a good deal of trouble and dissatisfaction. Those given herewith are such as are in general use, however, and were taught the writer by an English teacher of crocheting, herself a professional in the art; and by comparing them with the pattern one wishes to work, one can readily determine which to use. In some periodicals and books, the real slip-stitch is omitted, and the single is called slip-stitch; the double is called single, the treble is called double, the double treble is called treble, and so on.

There are different ways of holding the crochet-needle and carrying the thread, and many consider one way as good as another unless, as is usually the case, one's own method is thought a little the best. One of the neatest and most rapid workers of my acquaintance carries her thread exactly as when knitting, passing it over the crochet-hook from her right forefinger.

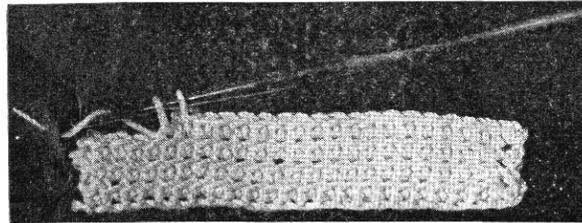
The following instructions were given by the English teacher in question, and are those commonly accepted. Hold the needle in right hand very much as you hold a pen when writing, letting the handle extend between the forefinger and thumb, which rest on and hold the needle. Hold nothing but the latter in the right hand, not allowing the fingers of that hand to so much as rest on the work. Hold work with thumb and second finger of left hand, letting the thread pass over the forefinger, slightly raised, or held up from the work, under the second, over the third and under the little finger. These instructions are especially good for using yarns, when it is desirable to keep the work as soft and fluffy as possible.

The **chain** may be called the fundamental stitch in crochet, and on this rest all the others. Much has been accomplished when one has learned to make this quickly and evenly. Make a loop of thread around the needle, take up the thread and draw through this loop (that is, push the hook under the thread that passes over the forefinger, draw it back, catching the thread, and pull this through the loop on the needle), forming a new stitch or loop, take up the thread and draw through this, and so continue until the chain is of the length required, tightening each loop as drawn through, so that all will be of uniform size and smoothness. After a little practice one does this without thought. When abbreviations are used that for chain is ch.

The **slip-stitch** is properly a close joining stitch. Drop the stitch on the needle, insert hook through the stitch of work to which you wish to join, take up the dropped stitch and pull through, thus making a close fastening. This stitch is sometimes used to "slip" along certain portions of the work, from one to another point, but single crochet is more often employed for this. The abbreviation is sl-st.



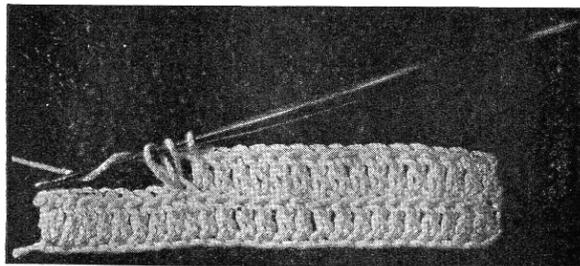
Single Crochet



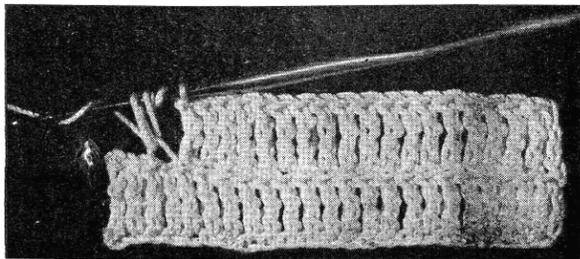
Double Crochet

Single crochet (frequently called slip-stitch, and sometimes mitten-stitch) is made thus: Having a stitch on needle, insert hook in work, take up the thread, and draw it through the work and the stitch on the needle at the same time. The abbreviation is sc.

Double crochet: Having a stitch on needle, insert hook in work, take up thread and draw through, giving you two stitches on the needle; take up thread and draw through the two stitches, the abbreviation is dc. There are many variations of the double-crochet stitch; as illustrated, it is the slipper-stitch or ribbed stitch, formed by taking up the back horizontal loop or vein of each stitch in preceding row. A quite different effect is given when the hook is inserted under both loops.



Treble Crochet



Double Treble Crochet

Treble crochet: Having a stitch on the needle, take up the thread as if to make a stitch, insert hook in work, take up thread and draw through, making three stitches or loops on

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the needle; take up thread and draw through two, again and draw through two. The abbreviation of treble crochet is tc. It will be noted that the single crochet has one "draw," the double two, and the treble three, from which these stitches take their names.

Half-treble or short-treble crochet: Like treble to *; then take up thread and draw through all three stitches at once.

Long-treble crochet: Like treble to *; then take up the thread and draw through one stitch, again and draw through two, again and draw through remaining two. This stitch is of especial value in working patterns in filet-crochet, since by its aid the space is made a more perfect square. The abbreviation is ltc.

Double-treble crochet: Having a stitch on the needle, take up the thread twice, or put it twice over the needle, insert hook in work, take up thread and draw through, making four stitches to be worked off; (take up thread and draw through two) three times. The abbreviation of double treble crochet is dtc.

Triple treble: Take up thread three times, Insert hook In work, take up thread and draw through, making five stitches on needle; work these off two at a time, as in double treble. The abbreviation is ttc.

One sometimes has occasion to use other extra-long stitches, such as quadruple crochet (over four times before insertion of hook in work), quintuple treble (over five times), and so on, which are worked off two at a time, exactly as in treble or double treble. In turning, one chain-stitch corresponds to a double, two chain-stitches to a half or short treble, three chain to a treble, four to a double treble, five to a triple treble, and so on, adding one chain for each extra "draw."

No. 1. Picots Along a Line of Stitches

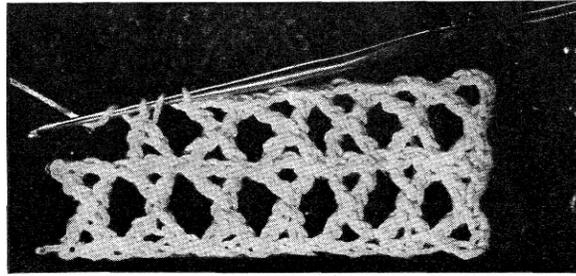


No. 2. Picots on a Chain



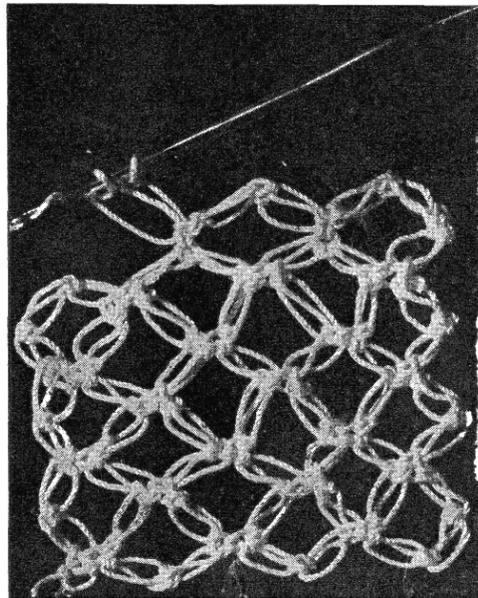
No. 3 Open Picots

Picots, frequently used to finish the edges of crochet lace and other work, are made in various ways, directions usually accompanying the piece of work on which they are used. For a closed picot, make a chain of three, four, five or more stitches, according to size of picot wanted, and join in a loop by catching into the 1st stitch of chain (the last, counting from hook), drawing closely together. Open picots are not caught in 1st stitch of chain but are made between two stitches placed close together, thus: One double in a stitch, chain three, a double in next stitch, and so on, making as many stitches as required between the picots. Or, picots are frequently made around a scallop or shell of trebles in the following manner: A treble in a stitch, chain three, fasten in top of treble. The abbreviation of picot is p or pic.



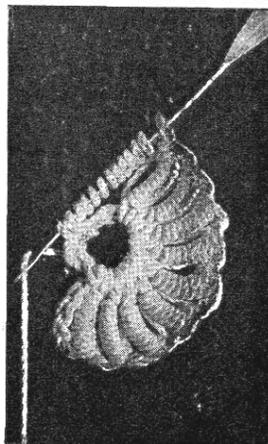
Cross-treble Crochet

Cross-treble crochet: This stitch is frequently used for the heading of lace, or as a beading through which to run ribbon, and is very pretty when neatly done. Take up the thread twice, as for double treble, hook in next stitch and draw through, take up thread and draw through two stitches, take up thread, miss two stitches of foundation, insert hook in next, take up thread and draw through, work off the stitches now on the needle two at a time until but one remains, chain two, and make a treble in the exact center of the cross treble. If a wider beading is desired, take up thread three times, at first, then twice, missing an extra stitch between and making three instead of two chain at the top. The abbreviation is cr-tc.



Knot-Stitch

Knot-stitch: Draw out the stitch on needle to a length of one fourth or one half inch, according to length of the knot-stitch wanted. Take up the thread and draw it through this loop; insert hook under thread just drawn through, between it and the first loop, take up thread and draw through, making two stitches on needle, take up thread and draw through both stitches, chain one, and repeat. Directions given are for one knot-stitch. Simply make a double-crochet stitch in the tip of the first drawn-out loop. When working a second row of knot-stitches over the first, fasten with a double in center of the knot between loops, or make a double under the loop at one side of knot, then on the other side. This makes a larger knot, more strongly resembling Solomon's knot, in macrame. Abbreviation is kn-st.



Roll-Stitch

Roll-stitch: This stitch, revived as are so many of the "new" things, was formerly called bullion-stitch. It consists simply of a coil of "overs" through which the thread is drawn. Working on any foundation, and having a stitch on the needle, wind thread around the latter smoothly ten times, or as many times as called for by your directions - such details are always given; insert hook in work, take up thread and draw through, again and draw carefully through the coil on the needle, again and draw through the remaining stitch. The stitch is not difficult, but requires practise to make it evenly and rapidly. A slender needle, tapering to the hook, is better for the purpose than a straight one, and its passage through the coil or roll is facilitated if the latter be held firmly between the thumb and finger of the left hand as the hook is worked through by the right. The length of the roll-stitch is determined by the number of "overs" used. Abbreviation is roll-st.

Parentheses () and asterisks or stars are used to prevent the necessity of repetition and save space. They indicate repeats of like directions. Thus: (Chain 3, miss 3, 1 treble in next) three times, is equivalent to chain 3, miss 3, 1 treble in next, chain 3, miss 3, 1 treble in next, chain 3, miss 3, 1 treble in next; or to * chain 3, miss 3, 1 treble in next, repeat from * twice.

The worker should be careful in the selection of a hook. It should be "well made and smooth, and of a size to carry the thread smoothly, without catching in and roughening it. If too large, on the other hand, the work is apt to be sleazy. Needles that have been used for some time work more easily than new ones. If all makes of crochet-needles were numbered in the same way the size might be easily designated; but it happens that no two manufacturers use like numbers for the same sizes, hence the rule given is the best that can be. This is true to some extent of the sizes of crochet-threads, and the worker is thus compelled to rely on her own judgment. Directions which, in one size of thread, would result in a doily five inches in diameter, would give in another size a doily twice that size. Needlecraft is, however, doing the best possible on this score.

Other stitches shall be given from time to time, as asked for, with any further explanations or information requested. It is hoped that the instructions herewith presented may prove of benefit and interest to the many who are desirous of learning how to crochet, and that even those who understand the "fundamental principles" here laid down may glean some hint that will be of assistance in their work.