

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by MARY M. ATWATER

Address all questions to Mary M. Atwater, Director of the Shuttle Craft Guild, Basin, Montana

Question: Please explain the "Bronson" weave — what is "straight Bronson weave?" What is "lace Bronson?" How does this differ from the Swedish lace-weave?

Answer: The correct name for what we call "Bronson Weave" is "Spot" weave. I came upon some drafts in this weave while I was preparing the material for my Shuttle-Craft Book. They were contained in an ancient weaving book by one "Bronson". I recognized the weave as a common one for linens in the old day, and in order to have a handle for it I called it by the name of the author of the book. Later I discovered in another ancient book that the correct name is "Spot Weave" and that it is a weave of English origin. The name "Bronson Weave" had become well established by that time, however, and most people know it by this title.

The "straight" Bronson weave consists in threading half the warp on the front harness, no matter how many harnesses are used, and threading the pattern threads on the rest of the harnesses. This way: 1,2,1,2,1,3,1,3,1,4,1,4, and so on. Typical drafts are Numbers 264-5-6-7-8 and 270, page 260

in the Shuttle-Craft Book. The warp is set somewhat closer than for plain tabby weaving.

Sometimes the weave is threaded as in drafts 256-7-8-260 and 261, page 256 of the Shuttle-Craft Book, and draft 269, page 260. In these drafts a small three-thread block occurs between the larger pattern blocks, all these small blocks being on the same shed. These drafts may be woven in the ordinary way as "straight" Bronson weave for linens, but when warped much further apart than for tabby and woven with fewer weft shots to the inch, the small intervening block omitted in treadling and a tabby shot used instead, an effect like the Swedish lace weave appears when the fabric is washed. This lace effect differs a little from the Swedish lace-weave. In the Swedish weave two alternating figures are used, in one of which the skips are in the warp while in the other they are in the weft. In the Bronson lace effect all the skips are in weft on one side of the fabric and in warp on the other side.

The Bronson lace-weave lends itself to more elaborate effects than the Swedish weave as it is possible to weave several blocks together to make large openwork figures. This is not possible in the Swedish weave.

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C O N T E N T S

Questions and Answers	Page 2
<i>by Mary M. Atwater</i>	
Speeding Up the Process of Loom Warping	Page 3
<i>by Florence B. Fowle</i>	
Did Your Wife Really Weave It?	Page 9
<i>by Nana E. Durrell</i>	
New Curtains for Spring	Page 10
<i>by Mary M. Atwater</i>	
Small Wall Hangings Adapted from Guatemalan Textiles	Page 15
<i>by Nellie Sargent Johnson</i>	
What Shall I Weave	Page 18
<i>by Ellis Prentice Cole</i>	
Table Mats for Busy Housewives	Page 20
<i>by Josephine Marie Ryan</i>	
Stripes: The Survival of the Fittest.	Page 22
<i>by Natalie T. Corbett</i>	
Curtains	Page 27
<i>by Doris McMullen</i>	
The Weaver's Guild of St. Louis	Page 28
<i>by Mrs. R. I. Brumbaugh</i>	