

"D" is for DAMASK

by DORIS McMULLEN



Damask is perhaps the richest of all fabrics and strangely enough requires the least in time and effort. The threading is simply and easily done in units and the weaving speeded up with only one shuttle being used throughout. It is therefore difficult to understand why more weavers are not producing this outstanding fabric.

Margaret Bergman, who is an inspiration herself, designed the pieces shown in the illustration.

I hung the large dinner cloth over a rod suspended from the ceiling so that the camera could catch the design. It measures three and a half yards by eighty two inches. Although it is seamed in the center the work was so carefully done that the seam is not noticeable.

Bernat's 50/2 linen set 40 ends to the inch is the best choice for warp although 40/2 can be used nicely. Linen Special No. 20 makes an excellent weft. Mrs. Bergman used an original design and her tree border is a welcome change from the usual floral patterns. Many fine drafts are to be found in the Shuttlecraft book. Mrs. Atwater also gives the tie-up and method of threading. It is not necessary to go into detail on planning width of border, repeats, etc., as that is an individual problem.

Damask is also the answer to more formal place mats. Bernat's linen special in color woven over 40/2 or 50/2 makes an excellent combination. Yellow is especially good. If one wants to be very thrifty Linen Special No. 20 can be used as both warp and weft with good results. This warp should be treated more politely than the round but an experienced weaver will have no difficulty.

While we are discussing Damask it might be well to show how beautifully it can be combined with Lace weave. The mat shown in the illustration B is much more interesting with the black of Damask than it would be without it. The Lace pattern is threaded on the first right harnesses and the black of Damask requires an additional four. In Lace weave as in Bronson it is necessary to use the same material for weft as for warp. 50/2 set 40 so the inch should be threaded 8 ends to a unit instead of the usual 6. For example 1, 7, 1, 7, 1, 7, 1, 2 and of course the 2 additional shots added to the usual treadling, that is: B pattern three times then B and A.

Bernat's gold metallic thread was wound with the weft for the weaving of the mat at B. This makes a very elegant piece with a beautiful texture that would complement any dinner service.

After all our weaving in the modern trend Damask is very restful. I sincerely hope more weavers will become acquainted with this technique.

