

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by MARY M. ATWATER

(Questions for this department should be addressed to Mrs. Mary M. Atwater, Basin, Montana.)

*Question:* Why is it that in weaving a plain twill for a tweed fabric one thread on the edge fails to weave in? What is the remedy?

*Answer:* There is no way of getting a plain tabby selvage for a twilled fabric except by the use of an extra pair of harnesses, to carry the selvage threads. The single thread that fails to weave in on one edge of a four-harness twill can be easily overcome simply by taking out and discarding this thread. There will be no further trouble if the twill is woven all the same way. However, if the twill is reversed the loose thread will appear on the opposite selvage, and it is impractical to suppress a selvage thread on each reverse in the treadling. When no special selvage harnesses are available it is necessary on the reverses to take the shuttle around the offending thread. However, if the reverse is made in the "dornik" manner the loose selvage thread will not appear on the reverses. That is to say, if you have been treadling: 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 1-4, and repeat and wish to reverse do not start back: 3-4, 2-3, 1-2, 1-4, but omit the 3-4 shot and reverse: 2-3, 1-2, 1-4, 3-4, and repeat.

*Question:* What, exactly, is a "tweed" fabric? Is it true that a tweed is always woven in twill?

*Answer:* The word "tweed" is often loosely used for any wool fabric with a rough texture, but this is often incorrect. Properly speaking, a "tweed" is a fabric composed of wool yarns for both warp and weft, woven in twill or one of the twill variations such as "Herringbone" or "Dornik." A twilled fabric composed of worsted yarns is not a tweed, and neither is a fabric composed of wool yarns

woven in plain weave. The latter fabric is correctly named "hop-sacking," but as there appears to be an odd prejudice against this name it is often called "homespun." "Homespun" of course, is the name of the wool yarn used and not of the fabric, but this misuse of the word causes little confusion and is allowable.

*Question:* How should a tweed fabric be finished when taken from the loom? Is it necessary to wash it, or will steaming and pressing suffice?

*Answer:* The fabric should always be very thoroughly washed in mild soap-suds, rinsed, and lightly pressed through a cloth, or run through a mangle, before it is completely dry. This washing is required to give the fabric the desired texture and should never be omitted. Very decidedly, steaming and pressing do not serve the purpose.

*Question:* How wide should a tweed suiting for a man's suit be set in the reed?

*Answer:* For this it is best to consult your tailor. Most tailors recommend a "finished" width of 32". For this set the warp 33" or 33½" wide in the reed, to allow for shrinkage. In weaving also allow generously for shrinkage. The rate of shrinkage varies somewhat with the yarn used and also with the setting in the reed and the weave. A fabric made on a warp set very open in the reed will shrink far more than a fabric with the warp set close, and a "fancy" six-harness or eight-harness twill with skips of more than two threads will shrink more than a close 2-2 twill.