

To knit a stocking, needles four,
 Cast on three needles and no more ;
 Each needle stitches eight and twenty,
 Then one for seam stitch will be plenty.
 For twenty rounds your stitch must be
 Two plain, two purl alternately,
 Except the seam stitch which you do
 Once purl, once plain, the whole way through
 A finger plain you next must knit,
 Ere you begin to narrow it;
 But if you like the stocking long,
 Two fingers' length will not be wrong.
 And then the narrowings to make,
 Two stitches you together take
 Each side the seam; then eight rounds plain,
 Before you narrow it again.
 Ten narrowings you'll surely find
 Will shape the stocking to your mind;
 Then twenty rounds knit plain must be,
 And stitches sixty-five you'll see.
 These just in half you must divide,
 With thirty-two on either side;
 But on one needle there must be
 Seam stitch in middle, thirty-three.
 One half on needles two you place,
 And leave alone a little space;
 The other with the seam in middle,
 To manage right is now my riddle.
 Backward and forward you must knit,
 And always purl the backward bit;
 But seam stitch, purl and plain, you know,
 And slip the first stitch every row.
 When thirty rows you thus have done,
 Each side the seam knit two in one
 Each third row, until sure you feel
 That forty rows are in your heel.
 You then begin the heel to close;
 For this, choose one of the plain rows;
 Knit plain to seam, then two in one,
 One plain stitch more must still be done.
 Then turn your work, purl as before
 The seam stitch—two in one, one more;
 Then turn again, knit till you see
 Where first you turned, a gap will be.
 Across it knit together two,
 And don't forget one plain to do;
 Then turn again, purl as before,
 And sew till there's a gap no more.
 The seam stitch you no longer mind,
 That, with the heel, is left behind.

When all the heel is quite closed in,
 To knit a plain row you begin,
 And at the end you turn no more,
 But round and round knit as before.
 For this, on a side needle take
 The loops the first slip-stitches make;
 With your heel needle—knit them plain,
 To meet the old front half again.
 This on one needle knit should be,
 And then you'll have a needle free
 To take up loops the other side,
 And knit round plain, and to divide
 The back parts evenly in two;
 Off the heel needle some are due;
 Be careful that you count the same.
 On each back needle, knit round plain;
 But as the foot is much too wide,
 Take two together at each side,
 On the back needle where they meet
 The front to make a seam quite neat.
 Each time between knit one plain round,
 Till stitches sixty-four are found;
 And the front needle does not lack
 As many as on both the back.
 You next knit fifty-six rounds plain,
 But do not narrow it again;
 'Twill then be long enough, and so
 Begin to narrow for the toe.
 Your long front row knit plainly through,
 But at its end knit stitches two;
 Together and together catch
 Two first in the next row to match;
 Then to the other side knit plain
 Half round, and do the same again;
 That is, two last together catch,
 Two first in the front row to match.
 At first knit four plain rounds between,
 Then two, then one, until 'tis seen
 You've knit enough to close the toe;
 And then decrease in every row,
 Until to stitches eight you're brought,
 Then break the thread off—not too short—
 And as these stitches eight you do,
 Each time your end of thread pull through;
 Then draw up all to close it tight,
 And with a darning needle bright,
 Your end of thread securely run,
 And then, hurrah! the stocking's done!