



Figure 13.—CORLISS' PATENT MODEL, 1843. The piece of wood in the foreground is an enlarged model of the needle. (Smithsonian photo 42490.)

together with the position of the eyes permitted the pointed shuttle, carrying the second thread, to pass freely through the loop in the ascending needle thread. The fabric was carried by a pair of cloth rollers, capable of sliding in a horizontal plane in both a lateral and a lengthwise direction. These combined movements were sufficient to enable the operator to produce almost every embroidered design. The ornamenting, which might be a yarn, cord, or gimp, was carried by the shuttle thread. There was no tension on the shuttle thread, which was held in place by the thread from the needle. The stitch produced was a

form of couching.³² It was in no sense a lockstitch. Fisher, who was the inventor, readily admitted at a later date that he had not had the slightest idea of producing a sewing machine, in the utilitarian meaning of the term. Although it has not been established that this machine was ever put into practical operation, Fisher's invention was to have a far-reaching effect on the development of the sewing machine in England.

³² In embroidery, couching is the technique of laying a decorative thread on the surface of the fabric and stitching it into place with a second less-conspicuous thread.