This invention relates generally to garments for infants, and more particularly to garments fabricated of stretchable material.

In infants' garments having legs and a crotch region, it is common to provide a row of snap fasteners along the inside of each leg and across the crotch region. This permits access to the infant for the purpose of changing diapers, without requiring that the entire garment be removed.

Although snap fasteners are widely used, they have certain disadvantages. Among these are the fact that there is an opening or gap in the garment between the points where the fasteners are located; snap fasteners require time consuming manipulation each time the child is dressed or undressed; and snap fasteners tend to open as the infant crawls around.

The use of a slide fastener in place of the snap fasteners would obviously obviate the difficulties mentioned above. However, this expedient presents further difficulties where garments of stretchable material are involved. The purpose of making a garment of material which is stretchable in all directions is to allow the garment to be comfortably worn by the infant through several stages of growth. A slide fastener is, of course, not stretchable. Hence, when it is used on the garment in the usual location, i.e., along the legs and across the crotch, it impairs or totally destroys the longitudinal stretchability of the legs and the transverse stretchability of the crotch region.

It is the object of the present invention to obviate these difficulties without sacrificing the benefits to be attained by use of a slide fastener. This objective is achieved by locating a slide fastener in a stretchable infants' garment in such a way that the benefits of the stretchability are not impaired.

In the drawings:
FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of a garment made according to the present invention, with the slide fastener closed;

FIG. 2 is a rear elevational view of the garment of FIG. 1; and
FIG. 3 is a rear elevational view of the garment with the slide fastener open.

Referring to the drawings, the illustrative garment shown comprises a torso covering part 10 having a front face 11 and a rear face 12, and a pair of arms 13, the garment also including a pair of legs 14 and a crotch region 15. The entire garment may be formed of material which is stretchable in all directions. Thus, the arms, legs and body of the garment are stretchable longitudinally and transversely in order that the garment will snugly and comfortably fit the infant through several stages of growth.

The garment may be said to comprise upper and lower parts. The upper torso covering part 10 has the usual neck and arm openings, as shown; the front portion 11 extends to the crotch region 15; and the back portion 12 extends to below the waistline as indicated in FIGURES 2 and 3. The lower leg covering part of the garment has a seat covering portion and is permanently joined to the upper part of the garment at the lower end of the front portion 11, thus forming the crotch covering portion 15.

A slide fastener 18 may be incorporated into the garment as shown. The slide fastener shown begins at a point 19 on the front face 11 of the garment adjacent to one lateral end of the crotch region 15 and runs obliquely upwardly along the front face. The slide fastener then continues around one side of the garment and substantially horizontally across the rear face 12 at a level below the waist of the garment. The fastener 18 then extends around the opposite side of the garment and obliquely downwardly along the front face 11, terminating at a point 20 at the opposite lateral end of the crotch region.

When a child is wearing the garment and his diaper is to be changed, his legs are lifted and the slide fastener 18 is opened in a single operation. The lower leg-covering part of the garment, which is now hinged to the remainder of the garment at the crotch region, is then slipped off. When the diaper has been changed, the infant's legs are slipped back into the legs 14 of the garment and the fastener 18 is reclosed.

It will be noted that the slide fastener 18 does not impair the stretchability benefits of the garment. The legs 14 obviously remain fully stretchable, as does the crotch region 15. The rear face 12 loses its transverse stretchability below the waist, but this is compensated for by the transverse stretchability of the front portion 11. Since the portions of the slide fastener on the front face of the garment are arranged obliquely, they do not affect the longitudinal or transverse stretchability of the garment in those regions.

The present invention, therefore, provides a garment for infants which combines the convenience of a slide fastener with the full benefits of stretchability.

The invention has been shown and described in preferred form only, and by way of example, and many variations may be made in the invention which will still be comprised within its spirit. It is understood, therefore,
that the invention is not limited to any specific form or embodiment except insofar as such limitations are included in the appended claim.

What is claimed is:

In a stretchable garment for a growing infant, formed of stretchable material and adapted to expand both lengthwise and crosswise in conformity with the infant’s growth: an upper torso covering part and a lower leg covering part, said upper torso covering part having a neck opening and arm openings and having a front portion extending to the crotch and a back portion extending to below the waistline, said lower leg covering part having a seat covering portion, said upper and lower parts of the garment being permanently joined at the lower end of the front portion to form a crotch covering portion, and means separably connecting said parts along a line extending from one lateral end of the crotch obliquely upward along the front of the garment then across the rear below the waistline then obliquely downward along the front to the opposite lateral end of the crotch, said means comprising a slide fastener extending along said line from one end to the other, the disposition of said connecting line allowing two-way stretch in the front of the garment and also in the waist and crotch regardless of axial non-stretchability of the slide fastener itself.

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