Chapter XVII

MILLINERY RENOVATIONS

MILLINERY which has lost its first freshness may often be renovated with great advantage and economy. The renovation may involve the unpicking, cleaning, dyeing and remodelling of all the materials of which the hat is composed, and even of remaking of the shape itself in an entirely different, and possibly a more up-to-date, style.

STEAMING.—Steaming is probably the best means of freshening and renewing many millinery items, and it may be done in three or more different ways, as described later on. If a velvet, felt, or straw hat has been out in a shower of rain, steam will often restore the velvet by raising the pile and obliterating the spots. It will also freshen and restore the nap of a velour, beaver, or hairy felt, as well as cleaning it, and most dark coloured straws are both cleaned and stiffened by being held so that the steam from a kettle of fast boiling water passes through it, from the wrong side to the right.

A trimmed hat which has been thoroughly brushed to remove the dust may be subjected to this treatment with the greatest advantage, providing that there are no tarnishable ornaments or trimmings on it. Materials that can be restored by steaming include (a) velvet and other fabrics having a pile on their surface; velvet ribbon; velvet flowers and foliage. (b) Lace, net, mourning crape, tulle, feathers and feather trimmings; quills, ospreys. (c) Dark-coloured smooth and rough felts, if not made very damp; velour felts, beaver felts, and many classes of cloth. (d) Satin straws, Dunstable straws, Tagel plaits, Liserette, wheat and other plaits with a smooth surface; chip-plaits, and plaits made of rush or grass.

Method 1.—To steam successfully, put a small quantity of
water into a kettle, and when the water boils, hold the article
to be freshened over the spout of the kettle; do not hold it in
the same position for many seconds, but keep turning it about
so that all the parts are made quite damp.

**CREPE.**—Crepe and crepe embroideries very readily spot
under the steam treatment, unless they are constantly turned
over, or are moved to and fro in the steam. Such items as crepe,
lace and tulle are more successfully restored if, after being care-
fully brushed to remove the dust, they are fastened on to a piece
of cardboard or a roller; the points of the lace can then be pinned
flatly down to prevent them curling when moistened by the
steam. After steaming leave pinned on to the card or roller
until quite dry.

**Method 2.**—Make a flat-iron very hot, invert it, or get someone
to hold it firmly upside down; lay a very wet cloth over the
iron to produce the steam. After brushing the velvet, plush,
etc., to be renewed, hold the back of it down close to the cloth,
and move it from side to side over the iron until all marks are
removed. A soft velvet brush, or a pad of leno muslin lightly
brushed against the pile during the steaming will help to raise
it and remove obstinate marks. When the steaming is complete,
remove the cloth and pass the back of the material to and fro
over the iron until it is quite dry. If it is not well dried before
it is used or put away the marks where the pile was "plushed"
will probably return.

All felted and woollen materials are liable to shrink and
thicken when subjected to the steaming process, so great care
must be taken not to make them very damp. While steaming
these, rub constantly with a clean cloth to remove the dust.

Steam softens the size and gum used in the finishing of many
straw and other plaits, and this may cause the centre of the
crown of a hat, or wide brim, to fall out of shape; if, however,
the shape is carefully pressed as suggested below, either on the
table or over a block before it is quite dry, it will become quite
hard and shapely in a short time.
WASHING.—Many materials such as light-coloured silks, ribbons, muslins, lace, chiffon, crepe-de-chine, georgette, sarcrenet, woollen materials, embroideries, woolly plaits and beads, may all be carefully washed in warm water and soap in the usual way, and, after rinsing, be rolled in a clean cloth to extract some of the moisture before being pressed. A little methylated spirit—about a tablespoonful to 1 qt. of water—put into the last rinsing water will slightly gloss and stiffen silk and ribbon. A handful of salt dissolved in the rinsing water will help to fasten a loose colour. Thin starch water—about half-a-teaspoonful to a pint of water—or a few drops of liquid gum arabic to a pint of water will slightly stiffen lace rinsed in it.

Black or dark coloured lace, net, chiffon, ninon, lisse, etc., may be freshened by being rinsed in blue water, milk and water, cold tea, or ammonia and water, and stiffened with gum arabic.

IRONING AND PRESSING.—When lace and raised embroidery are being pressed dry they should be placed right side downwards on a soft thick towel or blanket, so that the pattern may be well raised. Tissue paper or muslin laid over the back of the lace will prevent the iron marking or glossing the surface.

Ribbon and silk, if inclined to stiffen considerably under the iron, should have a piece of muslin laid over them before ironing. If only slightly creased, ribbon should be dusted, then ironed between tissue paper.

To press felt hats, place the felt between two damp cloths and press with a warm iron, always in one direction, i.e. with the nap, and continuing until the felt is dry; pull the cloth off the wrong way of the nap to raise it.

TO RENOVATE

SATIN RIBBON—Damp it on the right side only, turn it on the wrong side, hold an iron firmly in the right hand, place it firmly on one end of the ribbon, then with the left hand draw the ribbon slowly from under the iron. The iron must, of course, be wide enough to cover the whole width of the ribbon.
STRAW HATS.—To clean a slightly-soiled straw hat, moisten a nail brush with water, dip it into ordinary table salt, and brush the hat well until it is clean, then rinse in cold water. The cleaning should be done as quickly as possible, as straw, when damp, soon loses its shape. When brushing the crown-top support it underneath with the left hand, and place the hat flat on a table or board when brushing over the brim. To dry it, press out the water gently between two cloths; place the hat on a dry cloth with a second one bunched up in the crown to support it if necessary, and leave in a current of air, or a warm room to dry. It may be pressed inside and out with a hot iron while still damp.

To clean very soiled or discoloured light straw hats, mix together lemon juice and sulphur to make a thin paste, brush this well into the straw, and rinse when clean in cold water, using a brush to remove the powder. Dab off the superfluous moisture, place the hat on a very thick blanket, and from the wrong side press it into shape at once, or, if preferred, the pressing can be done when it is almost dry.

Black chip hats should be well brushed, then rubbed over with olive oil, and the oil then be rubbed off. This will restore the freshness and pliability of the chip.

FELT HATS.—White, Light Grey or Fawn can be cleaned by one of these methods. (a) Sprinkle the hat with powdered pipeclay, leave several hours, then beat and shake it out. (b) Rub the white felt with crab's-eye powder (care must be taken in using this as it is poison), shake and brush it out. (c) Stand bran in a warm oven until it is thoroughly hot through, rub it into the hat, being careful to rub with the nap, never against it; brush or shake out the bran, and if necessary repeat the process with more clean, hot bran. (d) Rub the hat lightly over with soft flannel dipped in powdered magnesia; leave three or four days, shake out powder and repeat if necessary. (e) Make a thin paste of powdered pipeclay, French chalk, or magnesia, brush it over the hat, leave to dry thoroughly, and brush out. The paste may be made by mixing the powder with plain water or petrol.
Black felt hats should be brushed thoroughly the way of the nap, then be rubbed the way of the nap with a cloth steeped in ammonia, benzine, or petrol. As the latter are very inflammable, never use them near a flame or in very strong heat.

GILT TRIMMINGS and ornaments that are tarnished may be restored to much of their brightness by being brushed over with powdered ammonia.

STEEL TRIMMINGS which have gone rusty may be brushed and rubbed well with crocus powder.

Beads should be tied in a thin muslin bag before being washed in a lather of warm soap, and rinsed in clean, warm water.

DARK COLOURED AND BLACK RIBBON, LACE, CHIFFON, VELVET, SILK, FELT, STRAW AND SATIN may be cleaned, and the colour to some extent restored, if a tablespoonful of liquid ammonia be added to a quart of warm water, and the article be either (a) sponged, (b) washed with it, or (c) pressed under a cloth wrung out of the mixture.

FURS—dark—shake and beat the fur to remove the dust; stand bran in the oven until thoroughly hot, rub it into the fur, then shake it out. If the fur has not regained its gloss and freshness, repeat the process with more clean, hot bran.

Light furs may be rubbed with hot bran or flour, as above, then well shaken. White fur may be covered with a paste made of raw starch and water to which a little blue is added. Spread this gently over the fur with a sponge, leave it to dry thoroughly, then shake it out. Do not damp the skin unnecessarily as wet tends to harden it.
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