CHAPTER VI

HOW TO CLEAN MILLINERY MATERIALS

CLEANING VELVET

LIGHT velvets if much soiled may be cleaned in a pan of gasoline, brushing the soiled places with a velvet brush; when clean hang up in the air till all the vapor is gone; it should not be steamed the same day. Of course you do not wring out materials cleaned in gasoline; they are to be hung up dripping.

To Steam Velvet.—To take the creases out of velvet, stand a large very hot iron up on end on a cold stove cover or an asbestos mat; wring a piece of cheese cloth or thin muslin out of water, spread it smoothly over the iron, and holding the velvet with both hands, pass the back over the iron, holding the velvet so that you pull it on the straight either selvage way or across; indeed it is well to go over it both ways. Just as fast as the muslin dries pull a fresh piece over the iron,
and do much-creased places several times over. Last, pass the back of the velvet over the bare iron to dry it off and effectually raise the pile. On no account brush the face of the velvet, and hold it at the edges, as every finger mark will show.

**HOW TO MIRROR VELVET**

If a piece of velvet is so marred that the creases will not come out, it can be "mirrored" by laying it flat on the ironing table, face up, and passing the iron over it just as you would iron a handkerchief, taking care, however, to pass down the nap, and not to stop in the middle of a pass, or you will leave the shape of the iron, which can only be removed by steaming again. This process makes velvet look lighter, and is very pretty in effect. Velvet ribbons can be done in the same way.

**CLEANING SILKS**

Silks that are soiled, except "wash silks," must be well brushed in a gasoline bath. Spots may be taken out with ether or some of the preparations sold for the purpose. Often one can press creases out of silk (after the gasoline has entirely evaporated) without dampening it; this is well
because it leaves it soft as new; but if the creases will not come out dry, steam it over an iron in the same way as directed for velvet, but with a thick pad of rolled-up cotton cloth or clean flannel brush out the creases on the iron, holding the pad on the creases for a moment to condense the steam; last pass it over the bare iron, and if stiff pull it on the bias both ways, which will soften the texture again.

CLEANING RIBBONS

Ribbons are done in the same way, but some very stiff taffeta ribbons will not answer to this treatment, especially white, cream, or light fancy ribbons. For these we recommend an old-fashioned but excellent method. To half a pint of gin add a tablespoonful of soft soap and a teaspoonful of honey. Lay the ribbon on a clean table and scrub well on both sides with a large nailbrush dipped in the mixture; when clean rinse in several soft waters and roll in a clean towel, so that every bit of the ribbon or silk is between two cloths. When partly dry press with a fine smooth bit of muslin, like an old handkerchief, between the silk and hot iron. Black silks should be steamed with ammoniated water, and if very
dusty may be wiped over with a cloth wrung out of cold tea, or better still, water in which raw peeled potatoes have been standing a few hours. Alcohol, too, is good to freshen black silk.

CLEANING CHIFFON AND MOUSSELINE DE SOIE

These soft, sheer fabrics may be cleaned by shaking with the flat hand in gasoline; let it evaporate, then hold stretched on the straight over the full head of steam from a boiling kettle or saucepan; afterwards hold in the same way close over, but not on, a hot iron. There is, however, a washable chiffon that can be washed and ironed like muslin.

CLEANING LACE

White lace, if of silk, must be cleaned in gasoline, afterwards pressed on the wrong side with muslin over it. Black silk lace can be treated in the same way, or the same as recommended for black silk. Press on a thickly covered board. White laces, if handsome and worth the trouble, should be soaked in several waters prepared with Ivory soap, good suds. Shake the lace frequently in this, and if there are any very dirty spots pat or brush gently, do not rub. When clean rinse in
several waters, and pin out on a thickly covered ironing table, taking care to brush out and pin all the little loops that form the edge. Pin right side up. When dry take up, turn, and press out the pattern with the round end of an orange stick or ivory penholder. If the lace is very soft and needs a little stiffening, dissolve a little gum arabic and mix it with the last rinsing water. If it is required tinted, make the last rinsing water yellow with saffron steeped in boiling water and strained, or écru with coffee, or cream with tea. Some laces, like Valenciennes, may be washed and ironed wet; never starch lace for millinery purposes.

CLEANING FEATHERS AND WINGS

Ostrich feathers, Paradise plumes, and aigrettes, may be cleaned in gasoline, shaken out and dried in the wind; even black are the better for this occasionally, as when dirty the fronds become stringy. But if feathers are badly out of curl as well as dirty, it is best to send them to some reliable featherdresser. Wings and breasts can be cleaned by shaking and rubbing gently with corn meal in a cardboard box; then pat and shake in the air. Light furs can be cleaned in the same way. Never use gasoline near fire or light.
CLEANING FELT AND BEAVER HATS

The corn-meal bath is equally efficacious for light felt and beaver hats and cloth; but these may be well brushed. Leghorn and Panama hats, if not too dirty and sunburned, can be scrubbed with Hand sapolio, rinsed, wiped, dried quickly, then pressed, with a clean dry cotton cloth laid over and a hot iron. Of course this applies to flat brims only; fancy shapes must be sent to a bleacher. Use a tiny iron—a tailor's round sleeve iron is best—for the inside of the crown.

To clean dark straws, brush well, rub into all corners with a bit of velvet, and brush over with white of egg. Black hats may be renovated by mixing good black ink with dissolved gum arabic and brushing the mixture over.

Flowers, if good but faded, may be retinted with ordinary water colors, if dirty the color can be mixed with gasoline, which will clean and tint at the same time.
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