CHAPTER 34

CLEANING

Cleaning Woolens—Silks—Velvet—Black Lace—White Lace—Grease-Spots—Machine-Oil
Stains—Blood-Stains—Fresh Ink—Copy or India Ink—Iron Rust—
Fruit Stains—Mildew—Paint—Chewing-Gum

CLEANING can frequently be done at home with very little trouble and expense.

TO CLEAN WOOLEN GOODS, the simplest method is washing in warm water and soapbark. Get ten cents' worth of soapbark and pour over it two quarts of boiling water. Let it stand until the strength is taken from the bark, strain, and pour into a tub of lukewarm water. Let the goods stand for half an hour in the suds, then rub well and rinse in another water of the same temperature to keep the goods from shrinking. Press on the wrong side before it is thoroughly dry. Experiment first with a small piece of the material to be sure that it does not change color or shrink badly.

FOR SILKS, mix six ounces of strained honey and four ounces of a pure soap with one pint of pure alcohol.

Lay each piece of silk flat on a table or marble, and with a brush cover the silk with the mixture, first on one side and then on the other. Brush the silk as little as possible and always straight up and down. Dip the silk in several tepid rinsing waters, the last one mixed with a little honey. Do not wring the silk, but hang it up, and when half-dry iron with a cool iron on the wrong side.

BLACK SILK can be freshened by sponging with strong black coffee, or with glove-water made by boiling an old black kid glove in water for some time.

A French method of cleaning black silk is to sponge the silk on both sides with spirits of wine, and then iron on the wrong side with a piece of muslin between the silk and the iron. Ribbons may be cleansed in the same way and rolled smoothly over a bottle or round stick to dry.

VELVET is cleaned by steaming. First brush the velvet thoroughly with either a soft or stiff brush until all dust and lint are removed. It is better to use a soft brush if the velvet is not too dirty.

If a milliner's steaming-box is at hand, invert a hot iron in the box and cover the face of the iron with a good-sized piece of muslin which has been thoroughly wet. This produces steam, and the muslin must be moved along as it dries. The velvet is held with its wrong side against the muslin and brushed carefully with a soft brush until the pile of the velvet is raised. Always brush against the nap. The pile may also be raised by holding the velvet tightly over a pan of boiling water.

FOR BLACK LACES, an old-fashioned cleaning mixture is made by boiling an old black kid glove in a pint of water until half the water has evaporated. Strain, and, if necessary, add a little cold water. After brushing the lace, dip it up and down in the liquid. Then roll it over a bottle, or pin smoothly over a covered board to dry.

WHITE LACE may be washed in a suds of pure soap, then thoroughly rinsed and pinned over a covered board to dry. Some laces will stand ironing on the wrong side. Let the lace partially dry, and iron over several thicknesses of flannel.

GREASE-SPOTS on woolen or silk are best removed by naphtha, gasoline, ether or
chloroform. These solvents are highly inflammable, and must, therefore, never be used in the same room with an open light or flame.

Lay the material, right side down, on a piece of clean blotting-paper or brown wrapping-paper. Rub around and around the spot with a piece of the same material which has been dipped in the cleaning-fluid. Be careful to approach the spot gradually and keep rubbing around the edge of the spot which is damp with the cleaning-fluid so that no ring forms. If you do not approach the spot gradually, the grease will spread over a large surface.

Ether and chloroform are less liable to leave a ring than gasoline or naphtha.

A good mixture for removing grease-spots is made from equal parts of alcohol, benzin and ether.

Grease can also be removed from silk or woolen materials by spreading French chalk over the spot and allowing it to stand for some time. This absorbs the grease. Shake the chalk off the garment and if it leaves a mark dissolve the remaining particles with benzin or ether, being careful to rub around the edge of the spot which is damp with these fluids until they have completely evaporated, to prevent a ring from forming.

POWDERED FRENCH CHALK OR FULLER'S EARTH may be used by placing the powder over the stain and holding over a heated iron. The heat will dissolve the grease, and the powder will absorb it.

Grease can also be removed from most materials by placing the material, right side down, over a piece of brown wrapping-paper and pressing over the wrong side of the material with a hot iron. The heat of the iron drives the grease from the material into the paper, because grease has a tendency to go from a warm spot to a cooler one.

TO REMOVE GREASE FROM WHITE GOODS, wash with soap or alkaline lyes. Colored cottons or colored woolens may be washed with lukewarm soap lyes.

MACHINE-OIL STAINS may be removed in the following manner: Moisten borax and rub it on the stain from the outside toward the center, taking care not to spread it. Pour water through the material. Washing with cold water and a pure soap will remove most stains of machine-oil.

BLOOD-STAINS may be taken out by washing with soap and tepid water. They may also be removed by covering the spot with wet laundry starch and allowing it to stand. Afterward it should be washed.

TO REMOVE FRESH INK. Fresh ink can be removed from almost any material by stretching it tightly over a bowl or deep vessel and pouring boiling water through the spot with force from a height. Or, if still moist, rub either salt, meal flour or sugar, and wash in cold water.

In White Materials lemon-juice may be put over the spot and covered with salt. Then place the article in the sun for a while, and wash. The process may be repeated, if necessary, until the ink-spot is entirely removed.

Another method of removing ink-stains from white materials is to let the material soak in javelle water, made from one-half pound of sal soda, two ounces chlorid of lime and one quart of water. After soaking a few minutes, wash in clear water.

TO REMOVE COPY OR INDIA INK FROM WHITE MATERIALS. Make a strong solution of oxalic acid and cold water. Soak the spot for a few moments in the oxalic acid and then soak it in ammonia. If necessary, repeat until the stain disappears. Rinse thoroughly in cold water.

TO REMOVE IRON RUST FROM WHITE MATERIALS. Lay the article in the sun and apply oxalic acid to the spot with your fingers wet with water. When the spot is removed, rinse the garment thoroughly. Also wash your hands well after using the acid. It is practically impossible to remove iron rust from colored fabrics, as the acid used in removing the spot takes out the color so that the remedy is worse than the rust.
The javelle water and lemon-juice suggested for ink-stains may also be used to remove iron rust.

TO REMOVE FRUIT STAINS. Make a solution of oxalic acid and water, using about ten grains of the acid to a half pint of water. Wet the article in hot water and then apply the solution of oxalic acid to the spot. Rinse it well after the spot has been removed.

TO REMOVE FRUIT AND INK STAINS. Soak the spot for a few moments in chloroform and then soak it in very strong ammonia. Try a sample of your material first, to be sure that the chloroform and ammonia do not remove the color.

MILDEW is the hardest of all stains to remove, and can not always be taken out successfully. Any of the mediums used for ink and iron-rust may be tried. For silk only, dip a flannel in alcohol and rub briskly, first on one side and then on the other.

PAINT, when fresh, can be softened with vaseline and washed off with benzin. Or, it may be rubbed with equal parts of turpentine and alcohol. If a grease-spot remains, remove it with benzin. Turpentine mixed with a little ammonia is also good. Wash off with soap-suds or benzin.

TO REMOVE CHEWING-GUM hold the under side of the garment over a hot iron until the gum is melted. Then wipe it off with a rag wet with pure alcohol. Do not use the denatured alcohol for this purpose.