

SCHOOL FOR HOUSEWIVES

BY MARION HARLAND

PRACTICAL LACE WASHING

Keep Lace on Bottles While Washing

LACE CURTAINS, more or less heavy with embroidery and edged with lace, are such a serious item in the housewife's list of work which must have her personal attention that her best plan is to put them into the hands of a professional cleaner if her time be of value for other purposes and her purse adequate to the hard pull of the professional bill.

As an important and initial measure, examine the curtains and repair them faithfully. If a stitch be broken, take it up in such a fashion that it will seem like the original weave. If a hole appears upon you, lay a bit of lace under it and darn it deftly, blending the edges of the bit of underlying lace with the main body of the curtain until the join is not visible to the casual observer.

If the scallop outer edge of the curtain be frayed, run a double thread along the curve to keep it in shape, and go over the frayed places with button-hole stitches, neatly imitating the original scallop.

Be careful not to draw the thread too tightly, as it will shrink away from the curtain in the wash, and the rent be made worse. When you think the task is done, hold up the curtain between you and the light and scrutinize it narrowly for thin spots that will break forth into holes under the operator's hand.

I take it for granted that you have a room that can be utilized for the curtains. My mentor thought her spare room none too good. But she protected the carpet with a rubber sheet, the best conceivable place is an attic that has a clean floor. Lay thick white wrapping paper down first.

Stretch a sheet over this and tack it to an uncarpeted floor. If there is a carpet, pin the sheet securely to it.

Now come the curtains. Fasten them in place with many pins, leaving no opportunity for sagging or wrinkling when the cleaning is in progress.

Have ready a bowl of warm suds, into which you have stirred a great handful of borax. Have ready, likewise, a new, clean, flat brush, such as is used for scrubbing paint. If two of you are to work, have two bowls and two brushes. The brushes must be fine and not harsh.

Put Warm Suds in Glass Jar

Wet them well; begin at the top of the curtain and scrub steadily toward the bottom. The suds should be so strong as to lather richly under the brush.

The scrubbing over, and if the curtains be very dirty, you should exchange the suds in the bowls for clean water at least for a pair; get pure tepid water, and, having wiped the suds off with soft linen towels, wash the brushes and dip them in the clean water. Swab the curtains freely with the rinsing water, wipe them from end to end with dry linen cloths and, leaving them on the floor, admit all the air and sunshine that can be coaxed into the room.

IRONING CURTAINS

In the course of an hour or two look in again, and if the curtains are nearly dry—just damp enough to be eligible to the ironing table—undo them carefully from their moorings, fold and carry them to the laundry.

Iron upon a fresh, fine sheet, drawn taut over several folds of flannel, or a blanket worn thin by much wear and many washings.

If you would the wrong side of the embroidery.

Take the preliminaries of mending, brushing and shaking must be attended to as scrupulously as in washing them.

The curtains must, also, be fastened securely to the floor or carpet, or to a table if you have one large enough. Lay a clean sheet under it. The substratum of thick paper may be omitted.

Provide yourself with a new and perfectly clean "complexion brush," and put it to a better use than that denoted by the name.

If there are two or more curtains, get a couple of brushes. Sift into a big pan three quarts of flour, mix with it a cupful of fine table salt, and set in the oven to dry, stirring now and then.

If the pan be heated before the flour goes into it, it will hold the warmth longer than would a cold vessel. The salted flour must be quite hot, yet not in the least discolored; the heat facilitates the process of cleaning.

Thrust a handful of the mixture upon one end of the curtain and rub it steadily, firmly, yet gently, into the lace. Proceed in this manner until you have treated every thread and mesh and figure. Take a handful of the flour at a time, and, should it cool too fast, set it again in the oven.

Curtains heavy with applique embroidery should be treated on both sides. The first scrubbing over, brush wet, and still damp, and was basted round and round like a winding stair.

When the last stitch was set the bottle was dipped into pure, soft water, set in the window where the sun lay and left there all day.

The lace in every hour the bottle was moistened and turned to let the other side get the benefit of the sun and air.

The lace was thus not quite dry when it was taken off at evening. Each piece was clipped with a pair of keen scissors. To pull on a thread would endanger a figure or point.

The liberated web was laid lightly, not to strain it out of shape, on the ironing board and pressed with a hot iron over several folds of flannel and through a cambric pocket handkerchief. Finally it was folded in lengths, and laid away in a box with a close lid.

If there be a better way of doing up edgings and insertions than that practiced in a time so distant that we think of it as twilight-land, I have never found it.

I still wind my narrower Valenciennes, thread, point, duchess and maline laces on a big-bellied bottle and set it in the southern window on a sunny day, and they last me well and long.

To Clean Cream-Colored or Ecru Laces.

The visitor to the world-famed Venetian lace factories has a new and not altogether pleasant sensation when, in reply to his demand for antique lace, he is informed, unobtrusively, by the obsequious salesman that "any design selected by the signor may be made antique in a few hours."

Squeeze hard in a soft, dry linen napkin until no more drops ooze through the cloth. Unfold the lace upon a clean towel and begin at once to pull the lace into shape, not skipping a single thread. Iron while it is damp, covering it with tissue paper and pressing through it. Press lightly on the right side to get the lace in order for a harder pressure on the wrong side, to bring out the pattern and to "firm" the mesh.

The ironing board should be covered with several thicknesses of flannel, and these with a clean—never coarse—muslin. The iron must, at no time, come into contact with the lace. Two thicknesses of tissue paper are better than one.

Valuable lace and good lace is always valuable—is worth all the labor and skill implied in this recipe for renovating it. Special care must be given to the delicate task of coaxing the dampened fibers and figures into shape.

Wide laces should be spread on the covered board and basted to it with very fine cotton. Every point and curve of the edge should have a stitch.

Professional cleaners make an extra charge when this is done—another reason why the economical lace owner should learn to do it at home.

Do not be tempted into using bleaches in the operation. If the lace be badly soiled, stir a little borax into the water in which it is soaked and washed. It is safe and efficacious.

If you are rich in laces and prize them aright, you will do well to keep on hand thin, long boards or pasteboards, to wind the cleaned laces on before putting them away.

Stretch them loosely and without stretching. Lace shawls should not be folded, but dropped flat, each on a separate box, to lie there in a careless heap.

Kept in this way, the finest laces will never crease or cut in the folds.

Spots on Books

INK spots or writings may be removed from a book by applying spirits of saltpetre, diluted with five or six times their bulk in water, which may be washed off in two or three minutes with clear water.

A solution of oxalic, citric or tartaric acid will answer the same purpose, as none of them affect the printing.

Grease spots may be removed by laying powdered pipe clay on both sides of the paper and applying an iron as hot as may be without scorching the leaves.

Mending with Net

with a clean sheet, to exclude the dust, and do not lift the sheet for forty-eight hours.

Take out the pins, or tacks, then lift the curtain by the four corners and carry it into the open air. Hang it over a clothes line, shake gently to dislodge the loose flour and let the wind do the rest.

Should the day be still as well as dry, you may have to lend a hand to the task by a series of careful shakes when you are ready to iron the curtains. Lay each on the ironing sheet, spread thin dampened cheesecloth (light in weight and sheer) over it, and iron on the wrong side, pressing hard upon the figures to bring them into clear relief on the right.

The damp flour supplies the slight stiffness desirable to keep the curtains smooth. It is well known to everybody that a touch of starch will prevent thin stuffs and linen from soiling so soon as they would if limp.

To starch our curtains stiffly would hinder them from hanging in soft, large folds, and make them brittle.

To Wash White Lace in the Old Way.

Our foremothers set apart a special day for the ceremony of lace-washing, and "did up" yards upon yards of the figured coverlets that were accounted riches as truly as gold and lands.

The laces were put to soak overnight in water, and then a dash of drastic alkali eating into the cobwebs.

They washed with their own fingers, tenderly, but getting out all the dirt. They kept a store of big-bellied bottles for the next and most delicate stage of the operation. Tall bottles, as wide as big of girth, were in demand.

One woman whose laces stood next to flesh and blood in her matrimony affections, went to the pains and expense of denuding two large demijohns of their contents and used them for her lace cleaning.

They were kept under lock and key and not in use.

The bottles were wound with strips of old linen from neck to bottom. Each strip was pulled into shape while wet, and still damp, and was basted round and round like a winding stair.

When the last stitch was set the bottle was dipped into pure, soft water, set in the window where the sun lay and left there all day.

The lace in every hour the bottle was moistened and turned to let the other side get the benefit of the sun and air.

The lace was thus not quite dry when it was taken off at evening. Each piece was clipped with a pair of keen scissors. To pull on a thread would endanger a figure or point.

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FAMILY MEALS FOR A WEEK

SUNDAY

BREAKFAST. Fruit, moulded cornstarch with cream. Spanish omelet, rice muffins, tea, coffee.

LUNCHEON

Beef loaf, tomatoes stuffed with string beans in salad, corn cake, peaches, tea.

DINNER

Rice and corn soup, boiled chicken and tongue, cauliflower with tomato sauce, fried eggplant, mashed potatoes, fruit ice cream and cake, coffee.

MONDAY

BREAKFAST. Fruit, cereal, creamed mackerel, stewed potatoes, tea, coffee.

LUNCHEON

Stuffed eggs with cream sauce, baked potatoes, bread and butter sliced thin, fruit, tea.

DINNER

Chicken and corn soup, chicken and tongue casserole with rice and mushrooms, baked sweet potatoes, lima beans, minute pudding with custard sauce, coffee.

TUESDAY

BREAKFAST. Fruit, cereal, minced chicken (left over), whole-wheat biscuit, tea, coffee.

LUNCHEON

Boiled shoulder chops of lamb, baked potatoes, bread and butter sliced thin, fruit, tea.

DINNER

Pea soup, broiled steak, boiled potatoes, green corn, breaded eggplant, peach shortcake, coffee.

WEDNESDAY

BREAKFAST. Fruit, cereal, ham, liver and bacon, hominy muffins, tea, coffee.

LUNCHEON

Mince of beef (left over), hashed corn and potatoes, popovers, tea.

DINNER

Boiled ham, with wine sauce; kidney beans, boiled rice, baked tomatoes, prune jelly and cream, coffee.

THURSDAY

BREAKFAST. Fruit, cereal, bacon and fried peppers, salted lard, tea, coffee.

LUNCHEON

Sliced ham, with pickles as garnish; baked sweet potatoes, Spanish salad, crackers, cheese, tea.

DINNER

Green corn soup, roast shoulder of veal, moulded potato, creamed young carrots, baked onions, peach tart, coffee.

FRIDAY

BREAKFAST. Fruit, cereal, kippered herring, potato cakes, toast, tea, coffee.

LUNCHEON

Barbecued ham, browned sweet potatoes, onion soup (left over), lettuce salad, tea.

DINNER

Cream of cauliflower soup, baked halibut, plquant sauce, Farina potatoes, string beans, apple sauce pudding, coffee.

SATURDAY

BREAKFAST. Fruit, cereal, scrambled eggs, with ham; Graham gems, tea, coffee.

LUNCHEON

Creamed fish, potatoes boiled plain, fried mushrooms, baked sweet apples, tea.

DINNER

Curry of veal, rice, bananas, chow; fried tomatoes, cauliflower salad, snow pudding, coffee.

THE HOUSEMOTHERS' EXCHANGE

I HAVE always enjoyed the Exchange, and have long wished to contribute my quota to it. I am sure the following practical "hitties" for the general good, will be pleasant to the general good.

1. For cleaning paint: Allow to a bar of ripe laundry soap a quart of water and two tablespoons of kerosene.

Shave the soap into strips and boil in the water. When you have a soft mixture, add the oil. Mix well and apply to the walls with an old paintbrush. Give a hard a pull of clean water with which to rinse the walls when you have scrubbed them.

If you do this at once and then wipe dry with soft cloths, you will save much work and time.

2. When preparing vegetables for cooking, spread a newspaper over your lap or the table to catch the waste. It may be removed easily when the work is done, and it keeps lap and table clean.

Old papers should be kept for this and many another use in the kitchen.

3. In baking bread we find it best to mix the dough in the evening, winter and summer. It does not sour in summer if dry yeast be used, as some suppose, and may be shaped into loaves or baked the first thing in the morning.

Then it is out of the way for the day. I do not take much time for kneading, but, of course, it must be smooth and even. I have excellent results with less trouble than formerly.

Now, a few words on the boarding house housekeeping question. There is nothing like having your own home and living to yourselves. I think the best married and at housekeeping for seventeen years, and am still alive interested in it.

Housework is a good, beautiful occupation, and it is too bad so many girls are not trained to it from childhood up.

It does not hurt one to know how to keep house and to learn how to cook. Even rich girls will find such knowledge useful.

Mrs. H. B. (Davenport, Iowa).

Our wholesome-souled, right-minded woman has put her finger upon a truth so patent and pertinent that it is odd how few take it to heart and put it into practice in bringing up daughters for the work of life.

No matter how rich an American girl may be by prospective inheritance, or in her own present right, she cannot afford to enter upon the duties of married

life without a practical knowledge of housewifery.

The press teems with stories like that of the bride of a farmer who asked "Which cow gave the buttermilk?" and the city girl who ordered from the butcher a leg of lamb one day and a leg of beef the next, and the young wife of a man who could afford a country cottage in summer and a housekeeper to whom the latter brought a domestic quinary. "The cows give three times as much milk as we can possibly use, madam. Wouldn't it be a good plan to buy a churn and make butter?"

"That would be a great deal of trouble," objected the mistress. "Why not milk just what we need, and not bother about the rest?"

We all join in the laugh, but whose is the fault that young women undertake a profession for which they have no more training than you and I, dear house-mother, have for railroad building?

From the outset our bride is handicapped by her ignorance. Servants play upon it and she is their abject slave.

"How do you keep your servants so long when the rest of us are changing constantly?" asked one matron of another.

Both were rich women and each kept a full staff of domestics.

"I think the chief reason is that I know how their work should be done," was the quiet reply.

"Each is persuaded in her own mind that if she were to leave me today I could step into her place and discharge her duties better than she can herself. It makes one delightfully independent."

I could write a volume on the subject. It is one that lies painfully near my heart, and every day brings new illustrations of the short-sightedness of mothers who yet hold their girls' happiness dearer than their own.

From a Norwegian Member

I wish to ask if some of our members will do me a favor.

I am a Norwegian and a good "hard-

anger worker." I have some pieces for shirtwaists which I am willing to exchange for nice silk scarves or for sheet muslin.

For a bundle of silk or roll of muslin I will send an entire coat for shirtwaist.

I have left one phrase untranslated in my foreign member's note. I believe I have given the sense of the rest. I hold her address in case readers should desire to open communication with her.

Some of our most valuable co-workers are of foreign parentage and birth.

"Mongui" Soup

Will you ask some of the members if they have ever heard of mongui soup, and, if so, if they will give me the recipe?

A. G. (Buffalo, N. Y.).

Here is one who never saw or heard of it.

For Renovating Feathers

How can I clean feathers which have been stored for so long that they are very dusty?

They are fine feathers, but I could not think of leaving the feathers in the warm sun, and wash them around for a while; run the wet mass through the wringer and rinse in clear lukewarm water.

Have ready several bars of cheesecloth, each half the size of a pillow tick into these toss the moist feathers, a handful at a time; when all are in the open air and sunshine, and have one of dough to dry shaking and turning every hour until

Next day, repeat the drying process. This must be done in the open, hot sun—this removal will be as sweet and elastic as when new.

A. E. S. (Chicago).

An esteemed correspondent gives this method of renovating feathers:

Rip one end of the tick; hold it closed with the hand and soak it in a tub of water.

When wet, it must be turned inside out, leaving the feathers in the warm sun, and wash them around for a while; run the wet mass through the wringer and rinse in clear lukewarm water.

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