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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

TUESDAY Sept. 5, 1933.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Subject: "Questions and Answers." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

Maybe you remember about the woman who said she could forgive and forget but she couldn't help thinking about it just the same. Your Aunt Sammy is in the same sort of a fix about your letters and questions. With all the other news I have coming in so fast these days to give you, I can't help thinking about the questions just the same. Perhaps the best way to get those letters off my mind is to dedicate a certain day each week to answering questions -- questions and other odds and ends. What about Tuesday? How would you like to have your questions answered every Tuesday? Let's try the plan awhile and see how it goes.

First question today. "Will you tell me how to take grass stains out of my young daughter's best white dress?"

I'll let the textile specialists answer that question. They know how to solve these spot and stain problems. First, they say, the sooner you remove the stain the better. Prompt action may save many a small frock or new pair of rompers. Fortunately, grass stains or stains from crushed foliage aren't difficult to remove if you take them in time and treat them properly. For washable materials -- and all children's clothing should be washable -- a thick soap solution and rubbing are important. Put the stained garment into a bowl of warm thick soapsuds and rub the spot thoroughly between the hands until the green color disappears. Sometimes, you'll find that a slight discoloration remains after washing. On white garments you can take this out with hydrogen peroxide.

Here's the way the specialists suggest applying the hydrogen peroxide. They say to spread the stained material over a bowl half filled with very hot water. Don't let the material touch the water but hold it close enough so that the steam will keep it warm while you are treating the stain. Apply only a drop or two of the bleach at a time, using a medicine dropper. After the stain disappears, rinse the spot thoroughly; otherwise the bleach may weaken the fabric.

Now suppose you have a grass stain on some material that won't wash. Then try sponging it away with denatured alcohol. Place a clean, folded cloth under the stain. With a cloth dipped in alcohol, stroke from the outside to the center of the spot to prevent the formation of a ring.

So much for grass stains. The chief point to remember about them are to wash in thick soap, plenty of rubbing or sponge them with alcohol.

Now for a few questions from home dressmakers. Here's a lady who is going to have a velvet dress this fall and who believes in making up her winter wardrobe early. She asks, "Can you tell me how to baste velvet without marking the fabric with the stitches?"

The textile specialists say that if you baste velvet with silk thread, you won't have much trouble with marks on the fabric.

Another home dressmaker wants to know how to take out the shine from the back of a wool dress which she is remodeling. Sponge the fabric with a little alcohol in water and be sure to press it with a damp pressing cloth. Generally you'll find that cleaning garments thoroughly before you make them over pays in an improved appearance. You can wash many wool garments successfully in lukewarm soapsuds. Others you can clean at home with cleaning fluid. Shine on wool fabrics comes from wearing down the nap and from soil.

Let's stop for a helpful hint contributed by still another home dressmaker. She suggests that after oiling a sewing machine, you sew through a piece of blotting paper. The blotter will absorb any surplus oil that might happen to be left on the surface. By the way, clean pieces of blotting paper -- preferably white -- are useful in many other ways around the house. They're handy for taking out stains -- as an absorbent to place underneath the fabric. They're handy in the dining room. If the youngsters happen to spill anything on the table or the floor, out comes the blotter to take it up before it does any damage.

Somebody asked me the other day whether to use whole or powdered spices in pickling. Of course, I passed that question along to the Recipe Lady. The Recipe Lady is in favor of using whole spices tied up in a little bag wherever possible. You remove the bag of spices before you put the pickles in the jars. This has its advantages. A little too much spice left in the pickles when you store them away often turns bitter on standing. But that reminds me. If you are interested in making your own pickles and relishes, we'll be having a talk about garden relishes on Friday -- this coming Friday.

A neighbor has phoned in to ask for some different but satisfying kind of refreshments to give her guests at an afternoon party. How would you like to serve little individual pumokin pies with plum jam and whipped cream? That's an extra-good autumn dish.

One last question. "Please tell me how to clean and polish a large copper bowl."

For a dull finish, clean the piece with a paste of rottenstone and linseed oil. For a bright finish, polish with fine whiting and alcohol. When dry, polish with a soft cloth. Treat brass and pewter in the same way.

Tomorrow: Let's plan a fresh fish dinner and talk over some facts about fish.

