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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, May 18, 1933 - 1933  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Question Day." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

Yesterday, after our discussion of food for the member of the family who is sick in bed, I promised to give you two spring menus, planned especially for the convalescent. I'll keep my promise right now. The two meals are for that getting-well-but-still-in-bed period when food needs to be simple and nourishing, but tempting enough to arouse dull and listless appetites. Both these menus are inexpensive. But expensive food isn't necessary to answer an invalid's requirements. The requirements are the right food served so that it is attractive and interesting.

The first menu: Shirred egg; Creamed tender new peas; Crisp celery hearts; Tiny whole wheat muffins and butter; Chilled fruit cup of strawberries and pineapple or other fruits in season. Did you notice the variety in color in that meal? Let me go over the menu again. (REPEAT)

Now here's a second spring menu for the invalid's tray: Creamed asparagus served on a small piece of crisp buttered toast; Crisp bacon; Tart red jelly; and, for dessert, Baked Custard or Apricot whip with cream. Once more. (REPEAT)

So much for the subject of food. Now let's give our attention to the home dressmaker.

Women who are doing their own sewing have been inquiring about outfitting their families for the summer at lowest cost. In these emergency times one good rule for saving expense is: Make the most of what you have -- use supplies on hand to best advantage. That goes for the sewing room as well as the kitchen. Make the most of your food supplies in the kitchen. Make the most of the fabrics you have on hand in the sewing room. Utilize left-overs and prevent waste.

And that reminds me of a letter from a lady on a farm who says she has on hand a supply of large sacks -- sugar, flour and salt sacks. She wants to know how to use them and if they would possibly do for clothing? Yes, indeed, say the specialists. Good sacking in large pieces will make all sorts of useful things. Of course, the sacks differ as to material. Sugar and flour sacks are usually of muslin. Some large salt sacks are of heavy blue-and-white crash. The way you can use these sacks naturally depends on the fabric. If you need to outfit the youngsters in your family for the summer, here's where the sacks will be especially useful. Those loosely woven soft muslin sackings will provide good material for slips for the baby, or even diapers, or rompers for the toddler or dresses for the very little girl. This fabric, especially the sugar sacks which are not as heavy as flour sacks, takes dye very nicely, in case you want to tint these little





dresses. The muslin will also do for children's plain summer underwear and for the trousers to little sunsuits. The upper parts of these small suits you might make of some firm net from left-over curtains. And by the way, this soft muslin sacking also makes attractive curtains for small windows.

Now about the salt sacks. Some of these are of light-weight crash in blue and white -- a soft material that looks somewhat like overall fabric but isn't. You'll find the blue-and-white sacking both attractive and serviceable. Plenty of good ways to use it. It will make comfortable and serviceable play suits for the young son in the family to take the place of overalls. It is softer, more comfortable, doesn't show soil quickly and launders easily. Three of these large blue and white salt sacks will make an excellent outdoor dress for a woman. The firm fabric doesn't crease or muss easily, is shadow proof and makes a sturdy material for sports, garden or other outdoor activities. It is also suitable for a summer light coat. This year coats may be whatever length your material allows and still be smart. You can even use it for a small breakfast cloth with a fringed edge.

Question Number Two is about removing the printing from these sacks. Several women, who would like to use the sacks, have asked how to take off those big blue or black letters. Many manufacturers of flour, salt and sugar are now stamping their printing on with ink or paint that will wash out. If the letters don't come out with the first laundering, you can boil the sacking with soap. Or you can rub soap on the wet bag, roll the bag up, and let it stand for several hours before washing. Or you can soak the bag in kerosene overnight to loosen the letters and then wash with soap and water in the morning. Some people advise rubbing lard into the ink and then scrubbing with soap and water. If everything else fails, you can bleach the material with Javelle water. However, the cream tone of the flour bag is generally more attractive than white, so avoid bleaching if you can.

Here's another home seamstress who wants advice on using men's shirts. She has a supply of discarded shirts, worn at the collar and cuffs but good otherwise. Old shirts will make rompers for the small member of the family who is still creeping; blouses for the small boy and waists for the young daughter's jumper or suspender suit. If you're making rompers, use the lower front and back of the shirts. The buttons on a shirt are sufficient for simple romper pattern. White or pastel colored broadcloth shirts are most becoming when made over into waists for little girls. As for the small boy's outfit, you can use one of these discarded white shirts for a small blouse and make the trousers out of the blue and white salt bag material. There, at no cost, is a comfortable, becoming and durable outfit.

By the way, if you have some questions of your own on home dressmaking, the Bureau of Home Economics has an emergency leaflet on clothing economy that may help you. Write direct to this Station or to the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, if you want one of these leaflets.

Tomorrow: "Feeding Your Child During His Growing Years."

