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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, March 14, 1932.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "New Clothes from Old." Information from Miss Clarice Scott,
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---ooCoo---

"Spring's here, sure enough," called My Next-Door Neighbor, as she opened my kitchen door the other morning and found me just finishing the breakfast dishes. "A little mild weather at this time of year and I begin turning my thoughts to clothes. That's what it is to be a woman in this world."

"New spring clothes?"

"Not many new ones this year. I'm going easy on my clothing budget. The problem that's on my mind just now is how to fix over my old dresses--the ones I wore last year and the year before that are still perfectly good but need a little skillful making over."

"Just my problem, too," I told her. "Let's see. There's my print dress. It's too short for styles now so there it hangs in my closet waiting for something to be done. And there's my blue frock. It's split at the elbows, but all right everywhere else and--"

"That's fine," exclaimed my neighbor. "I'm here to invite you to a clothing clinic at my house tomorrow. Please come and bring your old clothes."

"A clothing clinic?"

"Yes, a center to bring ailing garments for sympathetic treatment. A lot of us neighbors who do our own sewing are going to meet to discuss our making-over problems. It's my idea that some joint thought and action will bring some good remedies for what ails our clothes. Yes we'll just spend the day discussing, remodeling, pressing, cleaning, darning and patching--whatever seems the right treatment for the case. We'll take up every garment separately and diagnose it. By putting our heads together, we ought to turn out some very successful made-over clothes, don't you think?"

"A fine idea," I told her. "I'll be there with several dresses that need help."

From that clothing clinic I picked up a lot of useful ideas about remodeling clothes for this year's styles.

Of course, hopeless cases-- dresses in which the fabric was rotted or too worn--these we didn't attempt to cure. They would go to pieces too soon to be worth the time and effort.

But let me tell you about some of the successful cases treated. There were, for example, several different kinds of dresses that were too short. If the dress had a hem, of course, we let that down and pressed it carefully. Since many dresses today are finished by binding around the bottom, we finished the edge with very narrow binding of dress material. This is a successful finish for silk, cotton and linen dresses.

To lengthen tailored garments, let the hem down and then form a new hem with wide seam ribbon or a matching strip of thin silk. A narrow hem caught by invisible catch stitching in sheer thread works very well, too.

But suppose the hem is already let down as far as it will go. Then it's time to consider how to lengthen the dress from the top. Many attractive new dresses this year have the upper part of the dress--shoulder and yoke perhaps-- of one fabric and the rest of the dress in another. Sometimes a very sheer crepe is used for the top with heavy crepe for the rest of the dress. Others are made of prints and plain fabrics or laces and plain fabrics. If a dress is too short, you can often make it longer by using one of these new uppers. This is the right treatment, also, for a dress that is worn out under the arms or pulled across the back.

One dress at the clinic was too short and too worn in the waist to be fixed. So it was converted into a separate skirt to wear with one of these attractive new print blouses. They are either smartly tucked in at the waist or worn outside the skirt. In most of these new outfits the dominating color in the print blouse matched the plain color of the skirt.

Then there was the case of the kimono sleeve dress that had pulled and torn under the arm. Kimono sleeves have a tendency to do that. A clever way to repair this is to set in a piece of dress material about two inches square right at the place where the strain comes. This little square is cut on the straight of the goods but set in under the arm on the bias. That is, two opposite corners are in line with the underarm seam. Then the two other corners stretch one to the front and one to the back of the dress. This little piece allows plenty of room and provides "give" to prevent pulling when you move your arm.

What to do for the silk dresses that have cracked at the bend of the elbow? Fortunately, short sleeves of many different kinds are very much in style this year, so you can cut off the sleeve above the elbow line, bind the edge or finish it in some other way that will suit the style of the dress. When sleeves are badly worn you can always remove them and make the dress sleeveless. Just finish the armhole by binding. Sleeveless dresses with little jackets to go with them make some of the most serviceable and attractive spring and summer outfits.

Short jackets, little vests and bodices that go on over the dress are very popular just now, too.

Lucky for that dark blue dress of Mrs. Jackson's that they are. She got an ink spot right in the front of the waist and was on the point of abandoning the dress. But instead she made a little white pique vest for it that buttoned on very trimly and quite concealed the spot. One of the new bodices could be used the same way.

And that reminds me. This changeable bodice idea can provide you with several different outfits from just one dress. Suppose you have a plain, rough crepe dress. To go with it you can have several gilets of different colors, just like having several different outfits, you see.

Several woolen dresses that came to the clinic had been worn shiny in various spots. This shine is caused by grease and wearing off of the nap of the fabric. To remove it, sponge the material with warm water containing a little ammonia and press the garment lightly.

No, I haven't forgotten that this is Monday and that I promised you an economy meal today. So let's forget clothes while we write the menu.

The main dish is Mexican rice--a fine recipe that I'm going to give you in just a minute. Mexican rice; Savory mixed greens to go with it; Cottage cheese and green pepper salad; and for dessert, stewed prunes and apricots.

Eight ingredients for that good and inexpensive main dish-- Mexican rice. Here they are:

1 cup salt pork or bacon, diced	2 cups tomato
2 large onions, sliced	1 cup chili sauce
1 cup rice	2 cups hot water
1-1/2 teaspoons salt	1/2 teaspoon chili powder

I'll repeat that list (Repeat.)

Cook the salt pork or bacon in a large skillet until crisp. Remove from the fat; add the onion, brown it in the fat, and remove. Wash the rice and drain it thoroughly. Place it in the fat, stirring until it is a golden brown. Then add the salt, tomato, chili sauce, and water. Cover and cook until the rice has absorbed all the liquid and is tender, adding a little more water if necessary. Season with the chili powder, add the salt pork or bacon, and serve hot.

TOMORROW: "Safety at Home."

