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If Today Is Wash Day...

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If Today Is Wash Day . . .  

By Thelma Carlson

"KEEPING up with the Joneses," was as necessary in primitive times as it is today, but it was even better in those days to keep a little ahead, especially on Monday morning, when everybody rushed down to the river to get the best place for her washing.

Wash day for our ancestors was quite a different thing from that which it is for us, yet the principle for the same. Clothes have always and probably will always be cleaned by forcing water through them.

The very simplest method used by our primitive fathers was that of dipping the clothes into the water and then rubbing or squeezing them through the hands. Later they began to beat the clothes on the surface of the water, or to lay them on a flat rock or block of wood and pound them with stones, clubs or flat wooden sticks. This last method was known as the paddle-washing method. Though slow and hard on the clothes, it was still an improvement over the old method, and actually did quite a good job cleansing the clothes by forcing the water through the cloth by strength of the blow.

A variation of this method followed. Now the people dipped their clothes in water and beat them against a smooth stone or log. This was a little easier on the clothes, provided the operator used good judgment in striking the blow.

THEN people began to learn that those fortunate enough to find a hole or depression in a stone bed near the creek could put their clothes in this hole or basin and put water over them. By stomping on them or pounding them with the blunt end of ockles, the clothes soon became clean, the water being again forced through by the blow and carrying the dirt away.

One day by a mere accident it was discovered that by adding crude lye and animal fat, less stamping and effort was required to get the clothes clean. Upon this discovery they found that it was really necessary to have a container in order to save their soap. Such contrivances as hollowed out log ends and hollowed out stones came into use. This made it possible to wash wherever water was available and was a very important step.

From the method of dipping the cloth into water and squeezing or rubbing it clean grew the idea of the washboard. At first such boards had little grooves cut across them, forming ridges. Later, cloths were fastened across the board and finally metal ones of zinc or tin were made. By rubbing the clothes across the ridges, friction was set up which loosened the dirt.

Somewhere in the progress of these discoveries it was found that if the water were heated, dirt would dissolve more easily and more quickly. Before the time of basins which should be put over a fire, primitive man learned to drop hot stones into the water he was going to use.

Though men in all their discoveries were concerned only with the fact that they got the clothes clean, they had used all the fundamentals that have made the washing machine possible.

With these principles discovered and used since primitive times, we have made and improved the washing machine until we have the conventional electrical washing machine as we know it today. While there are many different kinds of machines on the market, most of them fall into four groups or at least a combination of them. These types are the dolly, the cylinder, the oscillating machine and the vacuum cup.

Dame Fashion to the Front . . .

By Helen Penrose

THE lure of spring is in the air. A young man's fancy may turn to love, but a woman's turns to—clothes.

We find most all material in a variety of colors this spring. However, there are a favored few which are seen often in the new costumes. Orangy reds, all blues, opalescent pinks and yellows are being, as it were, jetted and toned out by French designers. Of course, the black and white combinations are as popular as ever.

Materials in solid colors are used for many of the costumes, but prints with large floral designs, plaids, Roman stripes and lace designs hold their place in Dame Fashion's revue. Combinations of plain and printed silk are important, too. The printed silk appears in the blouse, scarf and lining accessories, with the solid color forming the basically plain costume. The "twin" idea in prints is here again so that each color takes its turn as the background, while the pattern in each case is composed of the other.

Cliffords and sheer cotton goods, in both plain and floral prints, are used for afternoon and formal gowns. Eyelid embroidery in lawn and batiste have placed these materials in line for more formal occasions.

Wonderas are usually considered an early spring fabric, but this year they will be used in lightweight, sheer materials for frocks. The rough, spongy weaves found in ponges, tweeds and crepes are made into charming suits and frocks for sport and street wear.

Sport frocks are jaunty with pockets and intricate lines of cutting for pleats and odd sections. At present, the length of the skirt for sports is remaining about the same, since golf and tennis take up the leisure time of most girls.

AFTERNOON gowns are long in length, with ruffles and frill touches to continue the feminine mode. The up-in-back movements are discovered in pephones, douces or tiers. According to the style experts, the pepheus may be pleated or have flaring lines.

Although there have been jackets, there are jackets and more jackets, one to match every dress, in the shops. For evening wear, contrasting ones are featured and many of these have flared tiers. Palonnas are a new note, and this year, the remaining will be worn not only for the beach, but for morning wear and for formal occasions, by those desiring the extreme costume.

Decorative angles in collars, tuck sleeves and side seamings distinguish spring coats. The lines are slim.