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MODERN SHOE POLISHES AND DRESSINGS.

By far the most important and widely used dressing is "*Ladies' dressing*," so called for its use on women's and children's footwear of kid and goat leathers. It is essentially a colored solution of shellac; borax, or an alkali, being the solvent and nigrosin the color. A little glycerin is usually added to prevent cracking and to preserve the softness of the leather. It is applied with a sponge and leaves, when dry, a soft, pleasing gloss. If soap solution is added to "*Ladies' dressing*" it becomes "*Gun-metal dressing*." This does not dry bright, but leaves a dull, gun-metal finish. *Patent leather dressing*.—This is usually simply olive or cottonseed oil, or vaseline, or white wax and turpentine. To hide cracks in patent leather, a solution of gun-cotton in amyl acetate, colored with a black spirit-soluble dye. *Nappy dressing*, for ooze, suede, castor, and nappy leathers is wood alcohol tinted with a color insoluble in water. The alcohol cleans the nap, and leaves the color, which, being insoluble in water, does not soil damp garments. *White leather dressings* may be the old-fashioned pipe-clay, or pipe-clay mixed with light magnesium carbonate. The latter gives a better white than pipe-clay alone. Another white dressing is zinc oxide suspended in water with a small quantity of an adhesive. This is applied with a sponge. These white dressings may obviously be tinted with umber, ochre, or other pigments, for canvas shoes of various shades. *Polishes*.—Carnauba wax is the basis of the best modern friction polishes. Candelilla wax may be substituted for the cheaper qualities of polishes. The wax is boiled until emulsified with a solution of borax. The product is known as "white stock." If a paste is required, this "white stock" is mixed with a sufficiency of hot, strong solution of common yellow soap and tinted with nigrosin. A soft paste is thus obtained. If a liquid is required, the best Castile soap is used, as this does not gelatinize on cooling. With moderate friction, the hard waxes held on the leather by the soap give a fine polish. Another method is to melt carnauba or candelilla wax, or a mixture of these, with paraffin wax or beeswax in hot turpentine, and mix with very finely powdered animal black. A firm paste is thus obtained, which easily spreads. When this is poured into boxes, it must be quickly cooled, or separation of the waxes may occur. Beeswax gives a toughness and lack of shortness to the paste, with a smooth finish, which cannot be obtained without it. For *tan leather polish* the basis is the same, but brown or yellow dyes are used instead of nigrosin. *Liquid shoe cleaner* is merely mucilage of tragacanth containing a little oxalic acid in solution.—J. T. Donald, (*J. S. C. I.*, 1913, 32, 459, through *Pharmaceutical Journal*.)