

HOUSEHOLD.

About Cracks in the Floor.

How to do away with the unsightly cracks in our wooden floors, and, especially, how to get rid of the noxious insects which are so likely to find refuge in them, is the subject of a couple of paragraphs in the Kansas City 'Star,' from which we quote as follows:

When the winter floor coverings are carried out, and great coolness and cleanliness is the result, too often an unsightly stretch of board is presented to view. Flooring in any except the best-built modern houses is so often ill-laid that the housekeeper is puzzled how to conceal the small chasms between the planks. Rugs are costly and dusty, and to paint or varnish a straggling floor is love's labor almost lost.

Common sense advises her to fill up the cracks, but how—not with putty? There is a better plan than that. Gather up all the letters from the waste-paper basket until there is a big bagful; enough paper to stuff a couple of big sofa cushions. Set the idle or the willing members of the family to shredding into bits the paper board. This accomplished, pile the tatters into a pot with water and cook it. To every quart of paper and water add a handful of gum arabic, and let the whole simmer to a very thick cream.

The sequence is easily guessed. The mixture must be put hot in the cracks, well packed, and neatly smoothed. When cold it is ready for the coat of floor paint, and as hard as the rest of the boards, for it is really nothing more nor less than a papier-mache, and every one knows what a tough article that is.

Cracks in floors are altogether too great a temptation for insects, so it is best to do away with the possibility of their proving a harbinger by adding a little Paris green to the paper filling. This poison will banish entirely the hideous water-beetles that often infest even the cleanest kitchens and bath rooms. Care must be taken to keep it away from children and pet animals, as it is very poisonous. A little mixed with sugar, and put on old plates or saucers over night, and used once or twice in a season, will be all that is required. Those familiar with country life know what a boon this green paint has been to farmers in ridding them of the ubiquitous potato-beetle, and there is no reason why the housekeeper should fear this ammunition if used intelligently. —'Voice.'

Don't.

A mother who found herself becoming peevish and exacting asked a sister who was visiting her to keep a strict account of the number of times in one day in which she (the mother) said 'Don't!' to her four children, respectively ten, seven, four and two years of age. The conscientious sister-in-law kept a careful memorandum, and when the children were in their beds for the night showed the tired mother the record. From eight in the morning until the same hour in the evening she had said 'Don't' eighty-seven times. After serious thought the mother came to the conclusion that at least one-half of those 'don'ts' had been unnecessary. She had grown into the habit of uttering the prohibitory word on all occasions. The nervous mothers of our day would do well to follow her example and limit the number of their 'don'ts' which are often spoken with regard to innocent, although perhaps noisy, amusements.—'Harper's Bazar.'

Remedies for Quiet People.

When we are called upon to assist a neighbor in time of sickness, we are often reminded of the fact that there are very few families who keep a supply of simple remedies on hand, ready for emergencies. A family medicine chest is one of the necessities in the household, and every housewife should understand how to use its contents. There should be a place for keeping all the bottles and packages, although it may be nothing better than an upper shelf of the closet or pantry. They can then be found without loss of time, which is not the case when the bottles are left scattered about on the windows and mantels all over the house.

The home medicine chest should contain

a bottle of camphor, some good liniment, a box of pills, a few doses of quinine in capsules, sweet oil, castor oil, paregoric, flax seed, mustard, borax, vaseline, and various other things that have been tried and found good.

Should any member of the family be severely burned, cover the burned portion with linseed oil, then wrap it with cotton batting. Allow it to remain twenty-four hours or more, then apply some healing oil or salve, and it will soon be well.

An excellent liniment for man or beast may be made by beating an egg until light, then adding half a pint of turpentine and a little strong camphor. This is good for a sprain or severe bruise, or a pain in any part of the body.

Castor oil, paregoric, flax seed, and mustard are remedies that are too common to need description. Nothing is better for a cut or a rough jagged wound than to bathe it with a solution of borax and water, and keep cloths wet with the solution around it. If the baby is troubled with the thrush, which is a common, and often a dangerous disease of babyhood, mix one part of borax with eight parts of honey, and apply it to the inside of the mouth. For common sore mouth, put a pinch of borax in a little water, and wash the mouth with it every morning. A little borax dissolved in water is good for sour stomach. It possesses wonderful anti-septic powers, and purifies and cleanses everything upon which it is used.

There should always be a roll of old muslin or linen kept in a convenient place, ready to use for poultices, often saves time, and needed for applying hot fomentations. A supply of sacks made of thin muslin, ready to use for poultices, often saves time, and time is valuable when the little one is suffering acute pain, or has an attack of the croup.—New York 'Observer.'

Selected Recipes.

Fried Mush.—The following recipe for frying mush is from the 'Country Gentleman': Make Indian meal porridge very smooth and well boiled, taking care not to scorch it. When thoroughly cooked pour into a shallow pan or dish, in which the mush will be three or four inches deep. Next morning cut in smooth slices about three-quarters of an inch thick, have ready a very hot frying pan, put into this some good lard or dripping, and when it is also hot, lay in the slices and fry to a crisp, golden brown, turning carefully, so as to break as little as possible. Serve hot, but do not cover the dish, and eat with maple syrup and butter. It is a little difficult for some people to prepare this dish well. They do not boil the mush enough at first or else they scorch it. Then many cooks fry it in this way: They put a cold frying pan on the stove, put in a big lump of cold fat, and immediately put in whatever they wish to fry, and let all heat up together. This product is a greasy, sticky mass, and this it is that has brought such discredit upon the practice of frying, which, if only properly done, is just as healthful as any other mode of cooking. If you have a very hot pan before you put in your lard and then let the lard also get very hot before you put in the article to be fried, the surface will instantly be crisped and the juice kept in, and no grease whatever will soak into it, as is so often the case.

Welsh Rarebit.—This is a Boston Cooking School suggestion: Melt one tables-

poonful butter, add one teaspoonful corn-starch, and stir until well mixed; then add one half a cupful of thin cream or milk and cook two minutes. Add one-half a pound of mild soft cheese thinly shaved, one-fourth teaspoonful each of salt and mustard, a few grains of cayenne. Stir until soft and creamy, and pour over toasted bread, toasted on only one side, or zephyrettes. There is a great difference in cheese, and failure sometimes results from unsuitable cheese. A speck of soda added to the rarebit will make it more digestible. No egg will be necessary unless it shows signs of stringing, when the egg is useful to blind it.

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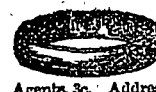
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THE 'NORTHERN MESSENGER' is printed and published every week at the 'Witness' Building, at the corner of Craig and St. Peter streets, in the city of Montreal, by John Redpath Dougall, of Montreal.

All business communications should be addressed, 'John Dougall & Son, and all letters to the editor should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'

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