

HARDWOOD FLOORS & RUGS VERSUS CARPETS

A new device
for
hardwood
floors

Wipe up
mopping
with salt
and water

Use plenty
of salt
in the light
against
moths.

An old
tennis
racquet
makes a
good
beater.

CYNICAL moralizers upon fashionable follies rate among these the demand for hard floors and rugs, which has increased and prevailed throughout our country within the last quarter century. The rage for rare and costly rugs is reckoned among the sinful misuses of wealth, which occupy the thoughts of professional casuists, who furnish copy (at regular rates) for magazine columns. In fact, hard floors and movable floor coverings are sensible innovations, because healthful and economical. Our grandmothers prided themselves upon keeping carpets "down" for a term of years, yet keeping them in good order all the time. Their floors were of soft wood; refuse odds and ends of boards were reckoned good enough, since they would always be covered. Dirt, beaten fine by the broom, sifted through ingrain, three-ply and rag carpets into the cracks below; and with dust went "germs." When disease got into a house and stayed there, the affliction was accounted "a visitation of God." Carpets, however scrupulously "broom-clean," were sure breeding places for germs invisible to the naked housewife eye. There are still honorable women not a few who object to hardwood

floors as "troublesome" beyond the capacity of housemothers of moderate means. They must be swept twice a week, we are told, and dusted daily, if one would keep one's house decent. Putting aside the question as to the composite nature of the dust removed, and which would, if left in a woolen carpet, find its way gradually, but surely, into the lungs and stomachs of those who walk, sit and sleep in the rooms thus made "comfortable," let us reason together over this same obligation of sweeping.

A soft hair broom is usually sold for this purpose. I find a stiff, staunch, rather broad besom of the regulation broomcorn variety, covered with a snug bag of red flannel, altogether the best agent in the work. It is as easily handled as a cloth duster; it may be untied, drawn off and washed when soiled; and it does not scratch the polished surface of the floor.

The rugs, be they cheap or expensive, should be lifted and shaken once a week, then laid upon the grass and swept on both sides. After which leave them lying on the grass, if you have a patch of turf. If you are a flat-dweller, let shaking, sweeping and sunning be done upon the housetop or in a vacant lot or in a

paved back yard—but in the open air, and, when practicable, in the sunshine. Fresh air and sunlight are the sworn enemies of malevolent microbes.

When you close your quarters for the summer—or for the winter, for that matter—have every rug well beaten. Flexible rods that do not abrade the nap or break the web are best for this purpose. The wrong side of the rug should be beaten to drive the dust into the fluffy surface. When thoroughly beaten, the rugs should be as thoroughly sunned. If this cannot be done, make a "smudge" of sulphur scattered upon a pan of burning coals in the bottom of a large packing box, and lay the rugs, one by one—wrong side down—over the fumes, shifting to subject a new part of the fabric to the disinfectant every few minutes. Don't wait for the smell of the sulphur to leave before rolling the rug, wrong side out, in burlaps or stout, unbleached muslin. Sew up one end, drop into the hollowed centre a handful of camphor balls, close the open end securely, and defy moth and microbes for the next ten years. If no eggs and larvae are left in the rugs and the sewing is properly done, none can get in. There is no such thing as spontaneous generation.

THE OTHER SIDE

Coming home after a summer by lake or sea or among the hills, all you have to do with the coverings is to rip out the stitches, put away the wrappings for next season, air the rugs for a few hours to rid them of the camphor smell and lay them down upon freshly polished boards.

Some of us live in houses which were built before the hardwood era. The refuse boards mentioned awhile ago are irregularly laid and of soft wood that does not take kindly to paint or varnish. Carpets are a necessity—more's the pity! To lift them every spring involves labor, expense and inconvenience to the woman of limited means, which she can ill afford. They cannot be properly beaten on the roof or in the back yard; a man must take them up, and a professional "carpet man" must lay them down. When these things, and the duty of weekly sweeping and daily brushing are taken into account, our economist

of work and money gives her vote in favor of hard floors and rugs. A carpet sweeper takes up the dust, and some housewives agree with the patentee in declaring that it does not wear away the carpet. Those who empty the reservoir of woolen fluff after each sweeping may incline to a different opinion. It is

certain, however, that it tears away less of the nap than the broom-brush wielded by strong hands. That the sweeper upon rollers does not get into corners is an admitted fact. One must go down upon her knees with a whisk broom to clear out the angles of the room. In those and about the base board do moths

and buffalo bugs most love to congregate. In these favorite retreats our distracted housewife is almost certain to find flourishing colonies of the squabblers upon opening the home after the summer's outing. Should her worst fears be realized, her best course is to have the carpet taken up and sent to a steam cleaning establishment, filling all cracks with gasoline and gum camphor while they are gone.

The second-best course is to cover the carpets with fine salt, and to sweep this into the wool with a stout, clean broom by going against the nap, and out of the carpet by following the grain in a second sweeping. Have ready, when this is done, a half pound of pulverized gum camphor, dissolved overnight in two gallons of gasoline. Go into the

room in broad daylight with this mixture in a can with a long spout. Saturate the edges of the carpet with it, pour into the cracks at the top and the bottom of the base board. Hold not your hand until the suspected portions are drenched and dripping.

This done, shut up the room closely, lock the doors and take the key out. Let not a creature open or enter the precincts for twenty-four hours.

Go in, then, in broad daylight and open the windows.

The hardest vermin that ever preyed upon woolen stuffs and housewife's sensibilities are not proof against this process.

Marion Harland

The Housemothers in Weekly Conference

A WISCONSIN member contributes a tentative list of meals for a day for people of moderate incomes. I wish she had included the approximate expense of the same. Just now we are in eager quest of ways and means by which a family of four, or even two, can eat nourishing food for a week at an outlay of \$1.50. Will some level-headed woman try the accompanying menus for one day, and let us know what it costs to put them upon the table?

Meals for a Day.

BREAKFAST: Rice, crab-apple jelly and cream, banana cake, coffee.

LUNCH: Scotch broth, pineapple and nut salad, biscuit toasted with cheese, angel puffs, tea.

DINNER: Codfish turbot in shells, baked veal steak, baked potatoes, parsnips, pieplant pie, cheese, black coffee.

TO MAKE SCOTCH BROTH.

One-half cup of barley, two pounds neck of mutton, two quarts of cold water, one-quarter cup each of carrot, turnip, onion and celery, two tablespoons of butter, one spoonful of pepper, one tablespoonful of chopped parsley. Boil the mutton in water for four hours, then add the vegetables and the barley, and simmer for three hours. Strain the soup through a cloth, and add the butter and pepper. Simmer for half an hour. This soup is excellent for the invalid, and is also good for the family.

FOR ANGEL PUFFS.

Beat whites of twelve eggs stiff, add two cups of sugar and one teaspoonful of vanilla. Bake in two layer cake pans for ten minutes. These are delicious when served with whipped cream.

VEAL STEAK.

Is much more wholesome if covered with egg, bread crumbs and seasoned and then baked three-quarters of an hour.

SALT CODFISH.

Makes excellent turbot and is very nutritious if baked in shells.

and seal under water. Keep in a cool, dark place.

6. No; you must have self-sealing jars. 7. I doubt it. If the skins are left on the tomatoes will not absorb the salt. If they are removed, the tomatoes will liquefy in the salt.

Here is a list of suggestions worth reading—and recollecting—from a valued contributor:

To preserve real thread lace from turning dark after it has been cleaned, lay it away in a box with a mixture of pulverized magnesia and French chalk, equal parts, sprinkled plentifully in the folds.

To remove red rust: Cover the spots with salt, moisten with lemon juice, and wash off with clean water. If not successful with these, use for fast colors muriatic acid. Spread the dry spots with a drop or two of the acid, when the rust is a little ammonia.

To bleach unbleached cotton the following is excellent: One quart of chloride of lime dissolved in two and a half quarts of warm water for use as a dip. Put the fabric in a strong bag, as must not come in contact with the cloth, and when white boil and rinse thoroughly. The following directions are followed.

Your remarks on kerosene were needed, for the indiscriminate use of it is dangerous. I knew of a very good lady who, because she could not help the growth of her hair, used it so freely that it penetrated her scalp and caused her to lose her hair. She forgot her own name. Sometimes I have used kerosene in a face given to me by a friend, and it has done me no harm. I may be rubbed on the most delicate cheek. I have also used it to relieve oppressed sinners.

I would like to know how the lady proceeds who gets a cent's dozen for fresh eggs. I should like to procure some such customers in this city for eggs and young chickens for brooding by the time I get to the point of selling.

In the neighborhood of New York eggs are not infrequently brought 60 cents per dozen, and I have known tender broilers retail at 50 cents a pound. Indeed, one of the New York clan, with whom I once chanced to lunch, informed me that the broiled chicken upon their plates cost 75 cents a pound. She also observed, however, that it almost "choked" her to eat them, when she recollected that they were 50 cents apiece!

These prices are paid, now and then—and by such customers!

I am a young housekeeper and a rather poor one, I am afraid. But I wish to thank you for the many helps I have received from your columns, and make bold to send you a scrap from my household book (some of the recipes are from "The Housewife").

Lard is a good substitute for butter in making cake, if a teaspoonful of oil is added. Try vanilla to remove the odor of turpentine. I have used it as before.

I wish all householders would save both ends of a five-year-old paper. The material for one of the articles you name should be sealed while it is in the paper.

4. Recipes for canning string beans have been given several times in this department. 5. I might say the same with regard to preserving fruit and vegetables by the cold-water process. Keep them upon the ice until you are ready to use them. Freeze tops and roots in a glass jar, pack 'em in a glass jar, and until the spring comes, tops while jars. Some

A lively young girl and a fastidious elderly single man have offered mild objections to the insertion in Our Exchange of a recipe for cleaning the speckling the cleansing of ink and grease spots and the extirpation of ants, flies, roaches and bedbugs.

The complainant editor, in overhauling a mail one-third of which had to do with the subjects our girl and our bachelor would taboo, confesses to sore perplexity. She knows but one way of learning what are the wishes and wants of the majority of her correspondents; and that is to read their letters, to note their contents and heed the appeals therein conveyed. When ten housewives a day write feelingly of the miseries endured by them and their families through the invasion of insect pests, I have no right to disregard their cry for help. This is what our name denotes, a mutual benefit association of practical housemothers.

Each member, writing in good faith of her experiences in housekeeping and home-making, and with a sincere desire that others shall profit by the story of her successes and her failures, has a right to be heard.

To cook rice properly, wash nice and clear, drop into kettle of boiling water, then set kettle on back part of stove over a low fire and let the rice simmer very slowly until it is done. Never, never drain water off and let it stand in a hot place a little while. Add a little milk, sugar, salt or butter, as preferred.

Fuller leather sometimes with nest-foot all when cleaning house. It makes it so easy to clean. Mix equal parts of turpentine, raw linseed oil and vinegar. This is excellent for cleaning furniture. Apply with a cloth and rub clean with a dry cloth.

I have but one amendment to offer to the directions for cooking rice given by "Mrs. W. K." of Chicago. "We" cook an even cupful of raw rice rapidly in two quarts of salted boiling water for about twenty minutes, giving the saucepan a sharp shake now and then to keep the rice from sticking to the bottom or sides. When it is tender, which we ascertain by biting into a grain, the water is all drained off, and the open vessel of rice is set at the side of the range to dry off. And every grain of our rice has a separate and distinct character of its own.

Scotch Broth, No. 2. To make this require two pounds of neck mutton, a large slice of turnip, two slices of carrot, one onion, a stock of celery, half a pint of barley, three pints of cold water, one tablespoonful of flour, one tablespoonful of butter, one teaspoonful of chopped parsley. Cut the meat from the bone and remove all the fat. Cut the vegetables into small pieces and put into the soup pot with the vegetables cut fine, and the water. Simmer gently two hours. Put one pint of water on the honor, simmer two hours and strain into the soup. Cook the flour and butter together until smooth, stir into the soup, and season with salt and pepper.

Scotch Broth, No. 3. One quart of strong mutton stock, from which every particle of fat has been removed. The liquor is a leg of mutton, a pound of butter, three pints of cold water, one tablespoonful of flour, one teaspoonful of chopped parsley. Cut the meat from the bone and remove all the fat. Cut the vegetables into small pieces and put into the soup pot with the vegetables cut fine, and the water. Simmer gently two hours. Put one pint of water on the honor, simmer two hours and strain into the soup. Cook the flour and butter together until smooth, stir into the soup, and season with salt and pepper.

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Scalloped Onion. Boil for ten minutes in hot salted water, drain this off and cover with cold, slightly salted. Bring quickly to a boil, cook the onions until soft, but not until they break to pieces. Sprinkle the bottom of an earthenware baking dish with the crumbs, arrange the onions in rows, sprinkle with more bread crumbs, moisten with some of the water in which the onions were cooked, dot the surface with butter and set aside until about thirty minutes before serving; then place them in the oven.

Cream Peppermints. Put a pound of white sugar and one and one-half teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar in a teaspoonful of cold water. Stir until dissolved. Bring quickly to a boil, cook the water, can be rolled into a ball with the fingers. Remove from the fire, allow it to cool a little and beat with a spoon until it turns white and thick. If it has become too thick, add a little water. If it has become too thin, add a little sugar. Roll into balls, and place on a greased surface.

Scotch Broth, No. 10. One quart of strong mutton stock, from which every particle of fat has been removed. The liquor is a leg of mutton, a pound of butter, three pints of cold water, one tablespoonful of flour, one teaspoonful of chopped parsley. Cut the meat from the bone and remove all the fat. Cut the vegetables into small pieces and put into the soup pot with the vegetables cut fine, and the water. Simmer gently two hours. Put one pint of water on the honor, simmer two hours and strain into the soup. Cook the flour and butter together until smooth, stir into the soup, and season with salt and pepper.

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