

Minnie May's Department.

Womans' Work.

To wash and bake, to mend and make,
The weary steps of toil to take;
To cook and scour, to dust and sweep,
And all the house in order keep.
To rise at morn and o'er and o'er,
Do duties done the year before,
And know that in to-morrow's train
The same things will come o'er again,
And often to herself to say,
The old, old lines in weary way,
'From dawn of day till setting sun
Woman's work is never done.'

To watch and pray, to gladly take
Love's crosses for love's crowning sake,
To love and grieve, to smile and weep;
Her deepest thought in silence keep,
To teach and lead, to hope and trust—
Have trust betrayed—as woman must,
To gently chide, to cheer and bless,
And bear with patient tenderness
Her burdens all; nor shrink away,
But bravely look ahead and say,
'From dawn of life till setting sun
Woman's work is never done.'

—Annie Halls.

DEAR NEICES,—I do not hear from so many of you as I should like. Have my neices Myra J. D. Hughes, J. Cook, etc., forgotten me. Of course I know you are all very busy but I think many of you who are such good housekeepers might favor me with some good recipe, for each one has some peculiarity in which they excel. Some understand the cooking of meats, others bread, others pastry, or preserves, or pickles, etc. Now, you see how much good it will do all to have an interchange of ideas. Hoping to receive plenty of letters full of good advice,

I am, your friend,
MINNIE MAY.

Farmers' Dinners.

MY DEAR NEICES,—There is no season in the year which requires more of our attention and labor than the present. We have to prepare good substantial meals for our men who have to labor so hard in the hot harvest fields. They should be unstinted in quantity and in reasonable variety. No meal should be considered complete without fruits. Laboring men are prone to consider them more as matters of taste and ornament than of use or nutriment. Often, in our ordinary eating, they are the one most important item lacking, and needed to keep the system in easy working order. I know it is not an easy matter to have fruits in much variety in early summer, unless we can draw on the last year's supply. The latter, however, we ought to be able to do, and now is the time to make the desired arrangements for another season. Stewed dried fruits can be used all the spring and early summer, and if carefully prepared are very nice. There is such an abundance of fruit this year that we should endeavor to preserve an ample supply. The cost of sugar is so trifling, and by adding a quarter of a pound of sugar to a pound of fruit, it will only require twenty-five pounds to every hundred pounds of fruit, and how enjoyable it is to have plenty in the early spring. Stewed dried cherries and berries, etc., make an agreeable change when other fruits are not so plentiful.

MY DEAR MINNIE MAY,—We are just as busy as we can be putting away our fruit for another year. We have made some raspberry vinegar and some black walnut pickles from the recipes you gave us, and am much pleased with them; the pickles will improve with age. I should like some of your neices to give a recipe for making grape wine. Will enclose a recipe for making Tapioca Blanc Mange and Floating Island, which looks so tempting on the table. Ever your niece,

H. I. WARREN.

TAPIOCA BLANC MANGE.

Half a pound of tapioca soaked for an hour in a pint of milk, and boiled till tender; sweeten to taste, and put it into a mould. When cold turn it out and serve in a dish with strawberry jam around it and a little cream.

FINE FLOATING ISLAND.

The juice of two lemons, the whites of two eggs, three tablespoonfuls of currant jelly and twenty medium-sized lumps of sugar; mix and beat these to a stiff froth. Put it into the middle of the dish and dress with sweetmeats; just before it is to be served pour cream enough in the dish to float it.

H. I. WARREN.

DEAR MINNIE MAY,—I was much pleased with the useful hints you gave about cooking green peas and potatoes in July No. Have followed your directions, and am happy to say my cooking has been much improved. I take much pleasure in offering our recipes for pickling red cabbage and onions, and hope they may be of some benefit to some of your young neices. From your niece,

A. E. PRICE.

TO PICKLE RED CABBAGE.

Choose a medium sized fresh red cabbage; tear off the coarse outer leaves; quarter it; remove the stalk; cut the cabbage into slices of about the third of an inch in thickness; place in a bowl; stew amongst it two good handfuls of salt; let the whole stand for twenty-four hours, stirring it once or twice; drain it as dry as possible; place it loosely in wide-mouthed jars, and fill up with strong raw vinegar, adding pepper corns, capsi-cums, pieces of ginger or what other spice you may fancy. By adding a few slices of beet root amongst it will make it a beautiful color, besides being a nice addition to the pickles.

SMALL ONION PICKLES.

Small onions, not larger than marbles, must be carefully peeled and thrown into strong brine. Let them remain eight days, changing the brine every other day. Dry in a cloth, place them in bottles, add spices, and fill up with strong distilled vinegar. A tablespoonful of olive oil will prevent the onions from turning yellow. Mustard seed, horseradish, allspice, cloves, black pepper corns and mace are all excellent spices for onions.

FRENCH CUSTARD.

Take one quart of milk, flavor it with the peel of about half a lemon pared very thin, sweeten to taste with white sugar. Boil it and leave it to get quite cold; then blend with it three desert spoonfuls of fine flour and two eggs well beaten. Simmer it until it is proper thickness, stirring it in the whole time. Pour into cups or a custard-dish.

TOMATO CATSUP.

Boil one bushel of ripe tomatoes until perfectly soft, squeeze them through a fine wire sieve; add half a gallon of vinegar, one pint and a half of salt, two ounces of cloves, a quarter of a pound of allspice, two ounces of Cayenne pepper, three teaspoonfuls of black pepper, five heads of garlic, skinned and separated. Mix together and boil three hours. It should reduce to one half. Bottle without straining.

Contributed recipes from our neices, for which we thank them all.

Our niece "House Girl" sends us the following excellent recipe for

CLEANSING FLUID.

I have used it to wash alpaca, camel's hair and other woolen goods, and find it invaluable for removing marks that little hands have made on furniture, carpets, rugs, etc.—4 ounces ammonia, 4 ounces Castile soap, 2 ounces alcohol, 2 ounces glycerine, 2 ounces ether. Cut the soap fine; dissolve in a quart of water, over the fire; add 4 quarts of water. When nearly cold add the other ingredients. This will make nearly eight quarts, and will cost about 75 cents to make it. It must be put in a bottle and stopped tight, and will keep good any length of time. When I wash dress goods I take a pail of luke warm water, and put in about a teacupful of the fluid, shake well around in this suds, then rinse in plenty of clean water, and iron on the wrong side while damp. For washing grease from coat collars, etc., I merely take a little of the fluid in a cup of warm water—apply with a clean rag. It will make everything woolen look bright and fresh.

TO BOIL CAULIFLOWER.

Soak the head two hours in salt water and cook until tender in milk and water; drain and serve whole with drawn butter.

STOVE POLISH.

By placing a piece of camphor, about the size of a hickory nut, in the stove blacking the blacking will adhere through the heat.

HOW TO CLEAN A TEA OR COFFEE POT.

If the inside of your tea or coffee pot is black from long use, fill it with water, throw in a piece of hard soap, set on the stove and let boil from half an hour to an hour. It will clean as bright as a new dollar and costs no work.

CARBOLIC ACID AND HOUSE PLANTS.

Several of my nice geraniums began to look sickly, and, upon examination, I found little worms at the roots. I applied a solution of weak carbolic acid quite freely to the earth, and found it restored the plants to health and beauty in a very short time. It will also kill lice upon the stalks, if applied with a swab or feather to the plants, without injuring the foliage.

EAR ACHE.

There is scarcely any ache to which children are subject so bad to bear and difficult to cure as the ear ache. But there is a remedy never known to fail. Take a bit of cotton batting, put upon it a pinch of black pepper, gather it up and tie it, dip in sweet oil, and insert it into the ear. Put a flannel bandage over the head to keep it warm. It will give immediate relief.

ELDERBERRY WINE.

Gather the berries ripe and dry; pick them, bruise them with your hand and strain them. Set the liquid by in glazed earthen vessels for twelve hours to settle; put to every pint of juice a pint and a half of water, and to every gallon of this liquid three pounds of good moist sugar. Set in a kettle over the fire, and when it is ready to boil, clarify it with the whites or four eggs. Let it boil one hour, and when it is cold mash it with strong ale yeast and turn it, filling up the vessel from time to time with the same liquor, saved on purpose, as it sinks by mashing. In a month's time, if the vessel holds about eight gallons, it will be fine and fit to bottle, and after bottling will be fit to drink in twelve months.

CURRANT JELLY.

To make the nicest jelly, bruise the currants when just ripe; drain the juice from them without pressing; weigh a pound of sugar to each pint of juice; boil the juice and skim well; then throw in the dry sugar; boil ten to fifteen minutes. Another way:—Strip the currants off the stems and bruise them thoroughly; put them on the fire to heat, and when at a boiling heat strain them; to a pint of the juice allow a pound of loaf sugar; put the juice on the fire, and when it boils add the sugar. When it begins to boil again, let it boil just fifteen minutes.

OIL FOR SHOES.

Take a piece of old India rubber, set fire to it and let the melted rubber drop into a pot of tallow. Rub this mixture on the boots and shoes, and it will effectually turn the water and keep the feet dry, with no injury to the leather.

MUSTARD PICKLES.

One hundred small cucumbers, two quarts of silver skinned onions, two quarts of French beans, two cauliflowers, one pint nasturtiums, one dozen small red peppers; salt each of these ingredients separately twenty-four hours; then scald them well with vinegar separately and throw the vinegar away; then take one-half pound of ground mustard, beat it smooth with a little vinegar, add two quarts of vinegar (bring your vinegar to boil before adding the mustard); pack your pickles in bottles and fill up with the vinegar and mustard.

CLEANSING BLANKETS.

It is quite as important to have the blankets on our beds clean as to have the sheets pure and white. Put two large tablespoonfuls of borax and a pint bowl of soap suds into a tub of cold water. When dissolved, put in a pair of blankets, and let them remain over night. Next day rub and drain them out, and rinse thoroughly in two waters, and hang them out to dry. Do not wring them.

But this is not the only domestic use to which borax may be put. Borax is the best cockroach exterminator yet discovered. This troublesome insect has a peculiar aversion to it, and will never return where it has once been scattered. As the salt is perfectly harmless to human beings, it is much to be preferred for this purpose to the poisonous substances commonly used. For cleansing the hair nothing is better than a solution of borax water. Wash afterwards with pure water, if it leaves the hair too stiff. Borax dissolved in water is also an excellent dentifrice or tooth-wash.

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