

Minnie May's Department.

MY DEAR NIECES.—I am going to give you a few hints on bread making, which should stand at the head of domestic accomplishments, since the health and happiness of the family depend incalculably upon bread, "the staff of life." Therefore, undoubtedly, you all strive to excel in that duty. There are many different modes of making bread, each of which requires great attention and care. Yeast bread is considered the standard bread, and is perhaps more generally found on every table than any other. Hence it is important to know how to make good, sweet yeast bread. Good flour is the first indispensable; then good, lively yeast, either yeast cakes or bottled. The following is the recipe by which the celebrated Vienna bread was made, that became so famous on the Centennial grounds for its deliciousness:—

Sift in a tin pan four pounds of flour, bank it up against the sides, pour in one quart of milk and water, and mix into it enough flour to form a thin batter; then quickly and lightly add one pint of milk, in which is dissolved one ounce of salt and one and three-quarter ounces of yeast; leave the remainder of the flour against the sides of the pan; cover the pan with a cloth and set in a place free from draught for three-quarters of an hour; then mix in the rest of the flour until the dough will leave the bottom and sides of the pan, and let it stand two and a half hours. Finally, divide the mass into one pound pieces, to be cut in turn into twelve parts each. This gives square pieces about three and a half inches thick, each corner of which is taken up and folded over to the centre, and then the cases are turned over on a dough-board to rise for half an hour, when they are put into a hot oven that bakes them in ten minutes.

The ingredients may be divided into smaller proportions, so that a single one-pound loaf could be baked as well as four one-pound loaves.

MINNIE MAY.

RECIPES.

MY DEAR MINNIE MAY,—I have a good recipe to offer for the benefit of those interested in your worthy department. It was sent to my mother to relieve her agony while suffering with a carbuncle on the back of her neck, and afforded her wonderful relief. For boils, and sores of almost any kind, it will be found of great service:—

Tallow, 1 lb.; linseed oil, 1 lb.; beeswax, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; Burgundy pitch, 4 oz.; Venice turpentine, 4 oz.; resin, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; oil of lavender, 2 oz. Mix all together and simmer over the fire for about twenty minutes. As this makes a large quantity, one-half of the above ingredients may be taken. I consider this recipe alone worth many times the price.

Yours affectionately, MYRA.

TRANSPARENT PUDDING.

Beat the yolks of eight eggs and the whites of two, and mix with them half a pound of warmed butter and the same of loaf sugar, pounded; butter cups or moulds, lay at the bottom orange marmalade or preserved apricots, pour the pudding upon the sweetmeats and bake from fifteen to twenty minutes. This is very rich, and should not be eaten by those having weak stomachs.

ARROW-ROOT PUDDING.

Dissolve four teacupfuls of arrow-root in a quart of fresh milk, boil with a few bitter almonds, pounded up, or peach leaves to give it a flavor, if you wish; stir it well while it is boiling, or until it becomes a smooth batter; when quite cool, add six eggs, well beaten, to the batter, then mix with it a quarter of a pound of powdered sugar (if brown is used it spoils the color); grate some lemon peel into the mixture, and add a little of the juice. The pudding should be baked an hour, and sent to the table cold.

KENTUCKY POTATOES.

Take raw potatoes; pare and slice very thin; place them in a pudding dish; cover well with milk; add pepper and salt, and bake until nicely browned; do not put them in water after they have been sliced.

WASHING VEGETABLES.

Vegetables should never be washed until immediately before prepared for the table. Lettuce is made almost worthless in flavor by dipping it in water some hours before it is served. Potatoes suffer even more than other vegetables through the washing process. They should not be put in water till just ready for boiling.

WASHING COLORED FABRICS.

Before washing almost any colored fabrics, soak them in water, to each gallon of which a spoonful of oxgall has been added. A teacupful of lye in a pail of water is said to improve the color of black goods. A strong tea of common hay will improve the color of French linens.

STAIR CARPETS.

Stair carpets should always have three or four thicknesses of paper put under them, at or over the edge of every stair, which is the part where they first wear out. The strips should be within an inch or two as long as the carpet is wide, and about four or five inches in breadth. This simple plan, so easy of execution, will, we know, preserve a stair carpet half as long again as it would last without the strips of paper.

DEAR MINNIE MAY,—You will confer a kind favor by publishing the following, for the good it may do. I have been a terrible sufferer from corns, but am happy to say, by using the following recipe, I have cured them:—

Take some small bits of beefsteak, soak in strong vinegar through the day, and bind a piece on each corn at night, drawing a stocking on to keep them in place. The same pieces of beef can be used the next night. A week or ten days is sufficient to remove any ordinary corn.

Your niece,
JANE GREY.

DEAR MINNIE MAY,—Though I have seen many valuable recipes in your column of the *Advocate*, I failed to find one which I am very anxious to get—ammonia jelly cake. Your attention to this will much oblige.

LIZZIE DAFRON.

[Can any of my nieces furnish one?—M. M.]

TO TAKE RUST OUT OF STEEL.

If possible, place the article in a bowl containing kerosene oil, or wrap the steel up in a soft cloth well saturated with kerosene; let it remain 24 hours or longer; then scour the rusty spots with brick dust; if badly rusted, use salt wet with hot vinegar; after scouring, rinse every particle of brick dust or salt off with boiling hot water; dry thoroughly with flannel cloths, and place near the fire to make sure; then polish off with a clean flannel cloth and a little sweet oil.

TO CLEANSE THE WOODWORK AROUND DOORS.

Take a pail of hot water; throw in two table-spoonfuls of pulverized borax; use a good, coarse house cloth—an old coarse towel does splendidly—and wash the painting; do not use a brush; when washing places that are extra yellow and stained, soap the cloth; then sprinkle it with the dry powdered borax, and rub the places well, using plenty of rinsing water; by washing the woodwork in this way you will not remove the paint, and the borax will soften and make the hands white—a fact well worth knowing.

STAINS.

Apropos of the paragraph that appeared in this department not long since, about removing stains from a green rep sofa, a lady writes:—

"My niece had a black velvet sack, one sleeve of which was turned a royal purple by a bottle of wine being spilled on it. Holding it over the steam of carbonate of ammonia restored the color entirely."

TO CURE A FELON.

As soon as the felon can be located, place over the spot a Spanish-fly blister, the size of a silver five cent piece. Let it remain from six to eight hours, at the end of which time the felon will be found just beneath the skin, and can easily be removed with the point of a needle.

CARE OF FRUIT CANS.

All fruit cans should receive immediate attention as soon as they are emptied, and should be emptied as soon as opened. They should be carefully cleansed, dried, and then put away in a dry place until wanted for future use. In no other way can they be made to last well and long. Never put your canned fruit in a cool, damp place, but always in a dark, dry place; if such place is cool,

so much the better; if not, it is better than in a damp place. Cans that have been properly cared for will last a series of years, good as new, especially tin ones, and these I prefer to put apples, pears, peaches, strawberries and tomatoes in. A high swing shelf, in a dry cellar that has plenty of air, is a good place for tin cans when filled. A dark cupboard is better for glass jars, when filled, as light is injurious in its action on glass. To open cans sealed with wax, dip the end fastened with wax into hot water, and soon the cover of the can may be removed with ease; remove all the wax from the can, and cover so that it may not get mixed with the fruit, and so spoil the flavor.

MOTHS.

This is the period when moths begin to fly, and those who have not packed away winter garments and furs should lose no time in doing so. Beat the articles thoroughly, and expose them to bright sunlight and air for several hours. Seal them up in tight paper cases, or put them away in close trunks, with plenty of gum camphor, pepper, tobacco, chips of Russia leather, or cedar dust.

Sour Milk and Soda.

I presume I can say nothing under this head that has not been said before in these columns. But I perceive that there are experienced housekeepers who have yet to learn how to use soda with sour milk. A woman of double my experience told me, not long ago, that she had now got so that she could make sour milk biscuit that her folks would eat. Now she mashed the soda and mixed it with the flour, then stirred in the sour milk or butter-milk. Before this she "puts the soda in a cup," but the biscuits were always streaked and spotted. This would not happen, I am sure, if the right quantity of soda was taken, and if the soda was carefully dissolved in water, either warm or cold, stirred quickly and thoroughly into the sour milk, and rapidly beaten up with the flour.

In giving directions to another, I think I should advise a thorough incorporation of the soda with the flour, after both soda and sour milk have been exactly measured. For then the effervescence (or foaming) would all take place in the dough, the gas would raise the flour, and the mass would surely be light. A careless cook will perhaps mix her sour milk and soda together, and while it is foaming and settling again to quiet, she is perhaps getting her flour and hunting up her rolling pin, and of course she doesn't "have good luck" with her biscuit. If she would get everything ready, even the buttered tins, and then measure out a level teaspoonful of soda for each teacupful of sour milk, or a rounding teaspoonful for each pint, then dissolve entirely the soda in a cup by itself, and stirring it quickly into her sour milk or butter-milk, (sour of course), pour the whole into the flour before the foaming fairly begins, and work it together quickly—there would be no streaks and no heaviness. But the best thing to do with baking soda, is to avoid its use as far as possible, for accurate measurement is impossible so long as there are varying degrees of sourness in milk, and different sized spoons and cups; and good things, and plenty of them, can be made without any soda.

How to Keep Prints Nice.

After all there is nothing so nice for household wear as calico. And now, when prints are so cheap, there is no excuse for wearing dirty, slatternly looking dresses at home or abroad, for a nicely done up calico is far preferable for any occasion, to a shabby worsted. Many think a calico dress is only fit to be seen before it has been washed, but with a little pains they may be kept looking nicely for a long time. Washed carelessly, starched stiffly, sunned a day or two, and half ironed, it is not a very comely sight. But if quickly dried in the shade, very thinly and evenly starched and ironed on the wrong side, so that it will not shine, it will look like a new dress for a long time. Calicoes should never be allowed to soak in the suds in washing. They should be sorted over as carefully as are white clothes, the lighter pieces put into clean, soft water, one at a time, and washed out and thrown directly into a tub of clean, cold water, soft if possible. A little salt in the water helps to set the colors. They should then be rinsed again in clear water, starched, and hung where they will dry quickly, in the shade, and with the wrong side to the light. This to prevent fading, and that if any streaking from the running of the colors appears, it may be on the wrong side. Salt will nearly always set blue so that it will not fade. For pink, reds and greens