

## FROM THE MAILBAG

### Catastrophe!

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I am hoping you can help me out of a difficulty. I have a huge white linen tablecloth just covered with mildew. I had used it for my wee girl's birthday party about five weeks ago and it got milk spilt on it. I put it in the wash-house intending to wash it out next day, but unfortunately was taken ill and had to go to bed for two weeks. So the cloth was just forgotten until yesterday, when I found it like this. It was given to me 25 years ago and such a cloth cannot be got nowadays. So you see how worried I am about it. I tried to wash it yesterday with just soap and water, but could see it was useless, so have just left it to dry until I hear from you. I am sure I've heard you give instructions for mildew, over the air; and if ever I get this cloth clean again I'll be most grateful to you. It looks a hopeless mess to me. I wonder if I sent it to a laundry whether they could do it for me! Well here's hoping anyway. "Featherston."

Don't give up hope yet. There are several good methods for treating mildew. One is to wet the article, rub with a cake of good washing soap, and then cover with a thick plaster made of starch and cold water. As your cloth is so bad you might put that starch paste on both sides. Then spread the cloth out on the grass for 24 to 36 hours. If it rains on it, so much the better. Leave it all night, too, of course. This method can be used safely for coloured things like shirts.

But the best thing to use for a white article is Javelle Water—a very old and safe remedy. Leave  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. chloride of lime to stand in 2 quarts of cold water overnight. Next day dissolve 1 lb. of washing soda in 1 quart of boiling water; and when it is cold add it to the lime-water which has been carefully strained through thick cloth. Keep this Javelle Water in a jar or some vessel, and use it in the proportions of half and half with plain water, soaking the mildewed article for an hour or more, watching to see the mildew fade away. Afterwards rinse very carefully, and then wash and boil in the usual way. This is a bleach; do not use it for coloured things. It can also be used to whiten very discoloured white clothes—always rinsing well afterwards.

### A Cracked Wash Basin

Dear Aunt Daisy,

We have just had an accident with the wash basin in our bathroom, and it is badly cracked. I remember some time ago hearing you say that a cracked basin could be repaired with a paste of some mixture containing, I think, whitening. I have looked through the notes I have taken from your broadcasts and Listener page, but cannot locate it. I should be most obliged if you could publish this again for me.

"Mac," Wellington.

It was not whitening, "Mac," but white lead. Get 3d worth from the paint shop, or possibly hardware merchant, and a small tin of goldsize. Mix these to a thick paste. Spread it on a piece of strong linen or other white cloth, and put this on the outside of the basin. This forms a hard cement-like substance which prevents the crack from being made any worse. If there are open cracks as well fill these with the paste and leave it to dry.

Another method is to mix equal parts of plaster of paris and white lead to a thick paste; work this into the cracks, and leave it to dry.

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