

FROM THE MAILBAG

Using Slack Coal

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Would you please tell us again how to use up the slack from the coal.

"Durham."

The easiest way to use the slack-coal, and one which gives a long-lasting bright fire, is just to fill your shovel with the coal-dust, and sprinkle it all over with a little finely powdered washing soda. Empty it very gently over the fire—do not tip it on violently. Some people

applied immediately. Brush a coat evenly on to the outside, working it well in, and then go over the inside the same way. Before the mixture sets, add another coat to the outside.

The work sets hard in a day or so, and is firm and solid, but not brittle. If not considered strong enough, more coats can be added outside at any time; or, of course, boarding may replace it near the ground, where damage from stock, such as pigs, has to be considered. Exceptional strength can be had, especially if required for roofing, by adding a second or even three layers of sacking, each being put on while the surface of the work is wet, and immediately covered with mixture.

FRUIT CAKE

Two cups butter; 2 cups light brown sugar; 7 eggs; 4 cups flour; 2 teaspoons mace; 2 teaspoons cinnamon; 2 teaspoons baking power; few grains salt; 2 tablespoons fruit juice; 2 tablespoons milk; 2lb. currants; 1lb. nuts; 2lb. raisins; ½lb. peel; ½lb. dates. All measurements level. Cream butter. Add sugar gradually and beat for five minutes. Beat egg yolks until light and lemon-coloured and whites until stiff and dry. Add these to the butter and sugar mixture. Add milk, fruit juice, chopped nuts, and fruit that have been rolled in flour. Lastly add well sifted dry ingredients. Beat mixture thoroughly and place in deep, round cake pan lined with several thicknesses of oiled paper. Bake four hours or longer with oven at 325 degrees F.

advocate making a solution of washing soda—about one good handful dissolved in 2 quarts of water—and pouring this over about a small sackful of coal-dust. Then make it into little heaps, or even fill into paper bags, and use it to bank up a fire.

A Cheap Shed

This easy method of making a quite serviceable make-shift shed, or even perhaps an extra bedroom by filling in a veranda-end, has been asked for by so many people that I think it should be printed here again. It was given to me by the N.Z. Farmer Weekly.

Stretch sacks tightly on a framework. As long as they are not rotten, their condition does not matter, for holes roughly patched and darned are covered when the work is completed. Make the framework in the usual way with posts and scantling. Make a cement-wash with 12lb. cement, 2lb. lime, 1lb. salt, ½lb. powdered alum, and about 6 quarts of water.

Mix the lime and salt and sift if necessary. Add the water and stir well. Next stir in the cement well. If the mixture is too stiff to work with a brush, add water carefully. When the mixture seems about right, stir in the alum. The sacks must be thoroughly wetted with water on both sides and the mixture then

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