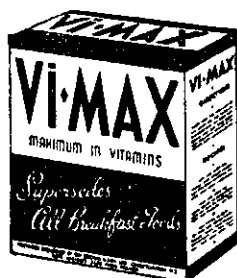


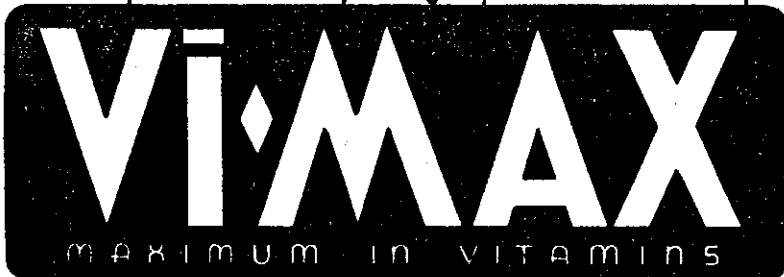
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AUNT DAISY'S MAIL BAG

Stretched in the Wash

Dear Aunt Daisy,

We are always very interested in your page in *The Listener*, as also your morning session. We wonder if you can help us with a cardigan recently dyed. It was sent to a dyer, and has stretched considerably, and is now much too large. It is not a hand knitted one, but a bought one, and has never previously been washed. Could you tell me if it could be successfully shrunk, and if so, what would be the best way to shrink it?—"Mrs. E.M.F." (Foxton).

Well, first of all I should go and see the dyer, and see if he knows he stretched it in the process, and if he can do anything about it for you. If he can do nothing, then I would suggest that you take it in as you would a cloth garment, on all the seams. Just run it down each seam on the machine, about half or three-quarters of an inch in, and that will make it smaller all over. Of course, you could always wash it in the "wrong way"—in very hot soapy water, and rinse it in fairly hot water, and then lay it out dry to the right size. Perhaps some other reader has overcome a similar difficulty, and could tell us about it.

Jam Too Tart

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I am writing to ask you if you can tell me what to do with some damson jam I have made. It is so very tart that the family will not touch it; yet I put a pound of sugar to a pound of fruit. The jam is keeping all right, but it is so very, very sour. Do you think that if I put some apples with it the tartness would be lessened? Or shall I boil it up again, and add more sugar? I do not quite know how much I should put, so would be very pleased if you could let me know.—Mrs. E.J. (Huapai).

I don't think apples would soften the tartness now, Mrs. E.J., though people very often add some apples when making damson jam in the first place. I think it is chiefly the skins which cause the excessive tartness. I would suggest that you put out all the jam into a pan and bring it to the boil. Then stir in about half a teaspoon of baking soda, and a tin or so of raspberry jam, according to taste. Raspberry jam is so very sweet that I think the two should blend well and make quite a nice preserve, even though the flavour won't be pure damson. Do let me know how you get on. Perhaps some other Link in the Daisy Chain may have a better suggestion. In any case, I think damson jam needs 1½ lb. of sugar to each pound of fruit. One recipe sent to me from Auckland specifies 5 lb. sugar and 3 lb. of damson, and one cooking apple and a breakfast cup of water. I will give the recipe next year in the jam season.

Coffee-Coloured Curtains

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Some of our Daisy Chain may be interested to hear of my happy experience with colouring curtains.

We have lately had our house painted a rich cream colour, and I felt a little anxious because all my front curtains were white, and I was afraid that the contrast would not be at all pretty. I had heard that yellow ochre could be used for dyeing; and as the painter was using some, I asked him to give me a little to try it out on a piece of white material. It was a great success, and so I dyed all my curtains and have been most satisfied. One has to be careful: but once used, it is very simple, and the great thing is that it does not fade. I have washed my curtains several times since dyeing them, but have never had to use the ochre again—as you would if you used coffee to make the cream colour. Here is the method.

I put about half a teaspoonful of the yellow ochre into a little cold water, just enough to mix it; and then poured a little into a bowl of very hot water. Dip the curtain in and out until it becomes the desired colour; and add a little more ochre as desired, and as the curtains absorb it. You will find that they dry lighter and may appear to be streaked; but when ironed and hanging it is not noticeable. Mine were silk. Of course one has to use judgment in dyeing anything, and one gains experience by doing so.—"Mina" (Christchurch).

A very interesting letter, and many thanks for it.

Chewing Gum

Dear Aunt Daisy,

As I so often find your page in *The Listener* so helpful, I wonder if through its medium you can help me still more.

After lunching in a restaurant, I found, sticking to the front of my skirt, a piece of chewing gum, which must have been stuck on the edge of the table. The skirt is of black cloth. Can you tell of anything to remove the mark?

I am enclosing two recipes which you may find of use.

Eggless Cake (very good)

Put into a saucepan and boil for three minutes, 1 cupful of sugar, 1 cupful of water, 1 cupful each of sultanas and dates; 2 tablespoons of golden syrup; ¼ lb. of butter (good dripping may be used instead), a little peel if liked; and one teaspoon of spice and cinnamon. When cool, mix in 2 cupfuls of flour and one teaspoon of baking soda. Bake in a moderate oven 1½ to 2 hours. This cake keeps beautifully moist. I put a few chopped almonds or walnuts in the mixture. This is a well tried old favourite. It is a fairly wet mixture, but turns out a beautiful cake, which keeps fresh for a long time. It always reminds me of cold Christmas pudding, but that is very popular, especially with men.

Marrow Pickle

Four pounds of marrow, 1 oz. of ground ginger, 1 oz. of mustard, 2 lbs. of sugar, 6 chillies, 24 shallots. 3 pints of vinegar and a few cloves. Cut the marrow (Continued on next page)