

## FROM THE MAILBAG

### Aqua Bowls

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I have just read "J.D.'s" query in *The Listener* about aqua bowls. I stayed with a friend at Easter who had one, and her instructions for keeping the flowers longer were "so many drops of peroxide." I am not sure how many, but I remember she just put a dash in the bowl before putting the flowers in.

"J.W.," Mt. Eden

### Aluminium Kettle Problem

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I heard a query on your session about an aluminium kettle turning the water black. My English magazine gave me the answer last week. All aluminium stains at first, with water. The method with a new kettle is to boil up for two hours before using, or the metal produces a kind of colour or stain. After 2 hours' boiling this disappears. A piece of apple, or rhubarb trimmings, boiled up, will remove stains from aluminium saucepans.

"Doris," St. Albans.

### Using Tin-foil

Dear Aunt Daisy,

We heard you asking for suggestions for using the tin-foil milk-bottle covers to send to an invalid. We wash ours and save them till Christmas, and then we use them for Christmas tree decorations. Some of them we cut into stars, and some we press over the pointed end of a lemon squeezer and make little bells, which we thread through with coloured silks, and mix them in with holly or other greenery; they look bright and fairy like.

Thank you for your bright and breezy talks, your enthusiasm, and kindly messages.

"Two Listeners," Mangere Bridge.

### About Coal Flowers

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I have wanted to write to you ever since I saw someone asking for the recipe for coal flowers. Do, please, warn folk that it spells ruin to some containers. I had a bowl with a glaze. The growth seems to have penetrating powers that have no limit. I saw a white powder on the outside of the bowl, and just wiped it off, and took no notice. It appeared on the oak sideboard, so I put it in a lovely flat, china bowl. Before the trouble was really recognised (for I could not believe my husband's words that damage was being done), the glaze was off the inside and outside of the bowl, the surface taken off the flat one, and later, the two little scrolls that served as handles just fell off. Two good articles quite ruined.

"Helen," Dunedin.

### Coal Dust and Slack

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Your query about coal dust and slack, from "F.E.W.," Thames, is undoubtedly a burning question this time of the year. I'm sure my suggestion, if given a trial, will please "F.E.W." and many other listeners. My late husband was interested in the coal trade for years, and he disliked tipping coal on to half a box of slack. It is essential to have a box of shallow depth, or a flat floor, barricaded off. When it is possible to reach a spot on the bottom, shovel your coal from that spot, and one will find that all fine coal is lifted along with the heavier lumps, and the amount of slack, if any, that is left before the next sack is due, is negligible. To those who have a surplus, I suggest that they scoop it up into a bucket and use on windy days or with coke. It will bank up your fire.

"Coalman's Widow," Ellerslie.

N.Z. LISTENER, JULY 16, 1954.

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