

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

Bees and Flowers.

Bees are attracted to flowers by the bright colors. The experiments of Miss J. Wery, a Belgian naturalist, prove that perfume has much less attraction, and that honey has none at all.

Coal Tar Dyes.

Experiments with fifty of the coal tar dyes have shown that fifteen are positively poisonous, and twenty others caused harmful disturbances of digestive organs, kidneys, or general health of animals. Only two colors proved harmful to the skin. The most poisonous colors are not among the greens, though the noxious character of the arsenical greens has given that impression, but among the coal-tar dyes the most seriously poisonous are yellow and orange colors, such as aurantia, mandarin, mentanil orange, and butter yellow. Next in order of number are the blues, browns, and blacks, very few among the violet and green colors having proven at all harmful.

New Source of Silk.

A wearable silk fabric made from gelatine solution is manufactured in Glasgow with undoubted success. It can be dyed any color, and takes all shades with a brilliant lustre that rivals even that of natural silk. The fibre is prepared by ejecting fine threads of a strong solution of a gelatine from very small orifices on to an endless band conveying them to bobbins, on which they are reeled. After leaving the small orifices, the gelatine solidifies in a continuous fibre a thousandth of an inch in diameter, possessing a lustre even greater than that of a natural silk. The fibre in this state, however, is unsuitable for use, as it is easily spoiled by water. In order to render it impervious, it is waterproofed by a special process.

A Lesson in Chemistry.

An elderly man dropped into a well known chemist's a short time back, and produced a much ink-bespattered but originally costly white shirt-front. 'Spilt the marking-ink over it,' he explained; 'and I've just called to ask if you can get it out any way. I've heard it's possible.' 'Oh, yes; certainly,' said the person addressed—'that is, if it is the ordinary marking-ink.' And taking the damaged article of dress, he proceeded to eradicate the marks, explaining the method meanwhile. 'You see, all these inks are chiefly composed of nitrate of silver, and this solution,' pouring some liquid over the front and allowing it to lie in a tray—'is bichloride of mercury, usually known as corrosive sublimate, and its action is really to bleach the parts acted upon by the silver—same principle as intensification, as practised in photography.' 'Er—yes. Just so,' said the interested watcher. In the space of a few minutes the chemist, having rinsed the solution out of the article, handed it limp but white to its owner. 'How much?' asked that worthy. 'Twenty-five cents, please,' was the reply. 'Too much,' remarked the gratified but ungrateful customer, laying fifteen cents on the counter. 'Just as you say,' returned the chemist, with affected carelessness. 'But I see there is one spot not erased yet. Allow me'; and he received the front back to remove the imaginary spot. 'You see,' he went on, laying it in another dish, and taking a bottle from the shelf behind him, 'the solution does not eradicate the ink, but bleaches it; and this,' he added blandly, pouring some liquid over it, 'is ammonia, which instantly restores the spots to their previous blackness, with perhaps rather more intensity.' The 'customer' looked on in dismay, while the chemist coolly rinsed the article and handed it back to him, with the remark: 'I am always pleased to show these little experiments, sir, and if you wish to have those ink-stains removed again I shall be happy to do so for one dollar. Won't have it done? Well, good morning, sir'; and, as the elderly skinflint left the shop in a towering rage, the man of drugs went behind his disappearing screen to enjoy a quiet chuckle.

CARRARA PAINT.

In white and colors, mixed ready for inside and outside use. Why use old style paints when past experience proves that in a few months' time you wonder if your home has ever been painted. Carrara costs no more than old style paints and retains its color and lustre for at least five years. A beautifully illustrated booklet entitled 'How to paint a house cheap,' will be forwarded free on application.—K. RAMSAY & CO., 19 Vogel street, Dunedin....

The Home

By Maureen

Tinned Meat.

When buying tinned meat notice if the tin bulges outwards in any place. If it does, you may be sure that the air has got in, and that probably it is unwise to eat the meat.

Ostrich Feathers.

To restore ostrich feathers, throw a big handful of salt on the fire, and then shake your feathers in the heat of the blaze, being careful, of course, not to singe them; they will look almost new after the process.

Potato Cheese Cakes.

Take one pound of mashed potatoes, a quarter of a pound of sultana raisins, a quarter of a pound of sugar, a quarter of a pound of butter, and four eggs. Mix well together and bake in patty pans, lined with puff paste.

Care of Brooms.

Before using a new broom steep it in warm water for a few minutes, and it will last longer, for the very dry fibres of the broom are brittle and likely to snap. The same treatment is advisable about once a week. Always keep brooms and brushes hanging up, for they soon spoil if left standing on the floor.

Imitation Ground Glass.

If you want to shut off any view, you can do it very cheaply with an imitation of ground glass. Dissolve as much Epsom salts as the water will absorb in a little hot water, and paint it over the inside of the window. When dry you will have a very good imitation ground glass.

To Cure Soft Corns.

Soak a piece of cotton wool in castor oil and place it between the toes, if the soft corn is there, or bind it on the part affected. Renew every night and morning until the corn disappears. Soaking a piece of cotton wool in turpentine and applying it in a similar way will have a like effect.

A Substitute for Chamois Leather.

Old pieces of velvet or velvet should, after they have served their original purpose, be saved for polishing cloths. They will answer the purpose of wash-leather for plate-cleaning, etc., perfectly, and save buying anything fresh. Wash the velvet or velvet cloths as often as needed in soapy water, and hang out to dry.

The Best Way to Give Medicine.

In giving medicine never use a spoon in measuring, as the ordinary household spoons vary very much in capacity. Use a graduated measure-glass, and always rinse immediately after use. Doctors' physic is proverbially nauseous, and in some cases a little may be done to disguise the taste. Castor oil is best taken in milk or coffee. Epsom salts may be disguised by peppermint water, quinine or cinchona by milk, senna by cloves, and aloes by liquorice. A pinch of salt on the tongue previous to taking will effectually disguise the taste of salicin or salicylate of soda; but in the majority of cases, by closing the nostrils tightly with the finger and thumb during the process of swallowing medicine, no taste whatever is appreciable.

Take Care of Your Flat Irons.

Many people have been annoyed at finding their irons quite rusty after they have been put away a few days. The way to prevent this happening is, before you put them away, to rub a little warm grease over them, and then wrap them up in brown paper. When you take them out to use, dip them into hot water that has had a small piece of soda dissolved in it, rub dry, and then put them to heat in the usual way. When they are ready to be used on the ironing-board, have a piece of brown paper with a little powdered bath-brick in it, and rub the surface of your iron with this. It seems rather a lengthy process, but it really does not take long to do it, and housewives will be rewarded for the trouble they have taken by finding the irons delightfully smooth and easy to use, and when they are like this the ironing can be done twice as quickly.

Maureen

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