

"Rather Face Hundred Women Than Two Hungry Men"

Miss Cecil Whitcombe, Well-Known Instructor In Cooking, Writes For "Radio Record"

TO go from a crowded demonstration hall to the quiet seclusion of a bachelor brother's home in Auckland, has been my lot since I left Christchurch.

You would imagine that I would make short work of cooking for one; on the contrary, my experiences have been confined to women, and it really was quite laughable when I found myself in the kitchen cooking and serving my first dinner to a critical male. My knees shook and I was in a state of "nerves," more especially when quite unexpectedly a friend walked in with him! I thought I would rather face a hundred women than those two men. However, I battled through. I grew quite fast at planning and serving these little meals. When more than usually successful my brother would

say, "let's write so and so, and give him a rabbit pie?" or some other dish that had taken his fancy. We had some very prolific passion fruit vines, and from them I evolved a passion fruit cream which received several "encores."

A guava tree next received my attention, and I made some capital guava jelly, to serve as a garnish with roast rabbit, etc. A friend wanted to know what next I was going to make from the estate.

Though I have in my time tried all classes of cookery, yet still in my opinion, plain and simple dishes rank first. But I like them perfectly cooked and served. So much depends on the making up of a menu, with due regard to the season, what's in your garden, the market, etc. It is quite a good plan to keep a regular notebook of recipes for the different seasons of the

year, then you can quickly refer to them in the making up of your menu 100 per cent. and if the notebook is kept up-to-date and fresh recipes added from time to time, there is never any chance of one's meals becoming monotonous. "Variety is the spice of life"; a nourishing attractive meal is more than a welcome to a tired husband. I think it is Lady Gertrude Gekyll who says in the preface to her cookery book that women should confine their attention less to the spreading of nets and more to the making of cages.

Cooking is not the drudgery it is supposed to be if an intelligent interest is taken in it. There should be method and order in the kitchen; and one should see that there is a good supply of the necessary utensils. I have been in a great many kitchens; too often I found it extremely difficult to cook. One cannot make bricks with straw. There should be in every kitchen a set of scales (for correct weighing), several basins, large and small, a roll of cooking paper, a pair of scissors, different sizes in cake tins, cutters, etc. It is not economy to put a small mixture in a large tin, and in most shops nowadays there is a splendid assortment of kitchen ware to be had very cheaply.

The kitchen to my mind is a temple. Let us see that it is beautifully kept and simply furnished, a credit to its presiding genius—the Woman in the Home.

::: HOUSEHOLD HINTS :::

A DRY piece or two of charcoal dipped in kerosene will make an excellent fire kindler.

IF when boiling a pudding the cloth is lined with greased paper all the flavour will be kept in and the cloth will not be soiled.

RED OCHRE, when applied to steps, hearths, and window ledges, will stay clean much longer and be practically impervious to rain if mixed with thin starch instead of clear water. This treatment will make the ochre adhere to floors and steps instead of being trodden into the house.

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SILVER or plated mounts on glass sometimes become detached. These can be easily and firmly replaced with a little plaster of paris. Mix the plaster to a thick paste with a little cold water and apply to the article with a knife, then replace the mount and wipe away any superfluous matter. Leave until the plaster hardens.

TUBS used for washing clothes, if made of wood, should not be left to stand empty from week to week. When the washing is done, clean them inside and out with warm, soapy water, rinse, and fill with cold water. Leave this in, as to empty the tubs would make them liable to shrink and so to leak. Metal ones, on the contrary, should be thoroughly dried after washing, and either hung up or turned upside down until required again.

WHEN a cork bath mat shows signs of warping or cracking, it should be reinforced at once with strips of strong, thin wood. These strips, with small holes ready pierced in them, should be fitted like a frame on each side of the mat and secured by a lacing of string, passing through the holes in the wood and through corresponding holes made in the cork mat with a red-hot skewer.

CRACKS in the iron casing of a stove or other ironware may be mended with a cement made by mixing iron filings with silicate of soda to a thick paste. This is forced into the crack with a putty knife, and the surface over and round it is covered with the same material. The heat hardens the cement, making it almost like iron. Another good iron cement may be made by

mixing iron filings, flowers of sulphur, and water to a stiff paste, applying it in the same manner.

KEROSENE rubbed well into boots or shoes which have been hardened by water will make them as pliable as new.

TO clean a kerosene tin, crumple up a newspaper and put in the tin, then set light to it; when the paper has burnt it will be found that the odour has completely gone, and the tin can be used immediately.

IF you have a soup you wish to thicken (either meat or vegetable), try mixing some coarse oatmeal with a little water and adding that to the liquid. You will find the soup has a much nicer flavour.

INSTEAD of throwing cigarette ash away each day, empty the contents of the ash try into a small box and use it for cleaning silverware. Use the ash with a moist rag, finish with a soft duster, and a brilliant polish results.

TO keep oak floors tight and in good condition, great care should be taken not to use an unsuitable preparation for cleaning purposes. Some cleaning preparations act as a trap for dust and dirt, and consequently the surface of the oak becomes dark. If the floor has become dark it should be washed thoroughly with soap and water to get rid of the dirt which has become embedded in the polish, and then polished regularly with a good polish guaranteed not to darken the oak. Not only will this treatment keep the floor its original colour, but frequent polishing of the parts subjected to the most wear will prevent the surface from showing signs of hard wear.