

lent and pretty table mats for polished tables. To make them, coil the cord in circle, circle upon circle, or in ovals, and sew the rounds or ovals, round by round, on the under side, firmly together. A pretty design shows three rounds, each surrounded by loops of the cording, then two ovals of the lacing made flat like braid, and between them more sewed disks.

Toilet Soaps

Several of our correspondents ask how they may know that they are getting pure soaps. For the toilet, pure castile or olive oil soap is the best. "How to determine whether a soap is good for toilet purpose, especially on the tender skins of women and children," says an authority on soaps, "is not a difficult matter. The amount of suds made by a soap is one of the methods by which too much alkali is indicated. The more suds a soap makes in a comparatively short space of time, the more alkali it contains. A cheap soap will create a large quantity of suds without any trouble on the part of the operator, whereas, an 'over-fat' soap (and for toilet soaps for women and children no other kind should be used) has to be rubbed repeatedly before it manifests a disposition to make even a little suds. The suds are caused by a chemical action in the water when the alkali mixes with it, the 'over-fat' soap, the good soap, forms an emulsion, does not undergo much chemical change. Another way to determine the presence of alkali is to touch the piece of soap to the tongue; if there is much alkali in it, the taste will be bitter; if there is no alkali there in harmful quantities, no bitterness will be observable. Another way, the most effective of all, is to drop a little sublimate of mercury on the soap; the mercury will at once cause the alkali to assume a yellowish hue, and the more alkali in the soap, the deeper this yellow color will be. The first two methods will suffice for the household." There are several pure white soaps on the market.

A Bland Soap, or Soap Cream

A very bland soap, which may be used on sensitive skins, may be made by adding to five parts of honey, four parts of any pure white soap and three parts of white wax; stir together over a slow fire, and add one dram of benzoin and one part of storax. This may be used by mixing with a little water, and will cleanse the skin most effectively. A very sensitive skin should not be washed just before going out into the air, and a little good powder is a great protection.—Contributed.

Timely Recipes

"Grandmother's Greens."—Take of wild things, sour dock, dandelion, lamb's quarter, crowfoot, mustard, and any greens afforded by the garden; pick over carefully and wash well; boil until tender; drain, and pour over them a pint of dressing made of one-fourth cupful of vinegar, one teaspoonful of pepper, tablespoonful of butter, teaspoonful of flour, salt to taste, boiled up together. Stir well and serve hot. Or parboil the greens, drain, cover with fresh hot water and add a generous slice of salt fat pork. Serve with good vinegar.

Lettuce.—Pick over and wash tender lettuce leaves, drain carefully and sprinkle with salt. Heat to a boiling point one cupful of good vinegar, tablespoonful of sugar, tablespoonful of butter, and pour over the lettuce, stirring or tossing with a fork all the time. Or, serve the salted lettuce and serve the dressing.

Wilted Lettuce.—Wash and clean tender lettuce leaves; wring and squeeze to pieces to get the water out. Take for each head of lettuce one cupful of vinegar and water equal parts, and two tablespoonfuls of ham fryings, heat together, and when hot

pour over the lettuce and serve at once.

Lettuce and Bacon.—Pick apart as much lettuce as is wanted, wash well and lay on a flat dish. Mince fine a piece of nice bacon as large as an egg; put into a skillet and fry crisp; to it add one cupful of vinegar (a little water, if strong), and salt, pepper and sugar to taste. When the mixture boils up, pour over the lettuce and mix well together. Let stand twenty minutes and serve.

Lettuce Salad.—Wash and pick over as much lettuce as is wanted; cut fine, for four heads of lettuce, four hard-boiled eggs, and rub them into a paste; to this add half a teaspoonful of black pepper, half a teaspoonful of mustard, a little salt, sugar, if liked. Heat a cupful of vinegar with a small lump of butter (nice meat-fryings is better), and pour over the lettuce. Mix, garnish with the whites of the eggs, and serve. Lettuce may be served with finely sliced green onions, and are liked so by many.

Housekeeper's Chemicals

Sal-soda is a very cheap chemical, and forms the basis of most of the washing powders on the market; it forms a soap with grease which is readily dissolved and carried away. Borax is a compound of sodium with boric acid, and acts as a mild alkali; it is the safest of all alkalies and affects colored fabrics less than does ammonia. Some of the solvents for grease are alcohol, chloroform, ether, benzine, naphtha, gasoline—these, too, are all volatile and should be tightly corked and distinctly labeled—kerosene, and turpentine—the latter two the least volatile—benzine, naphtha or gasoline are sometimes sold for one another. They will not mix with water, and are very inflammable, and should be used with the greatest discretion. Kerosene is a valuable agent in the household. The deodorized quality can be furnished by some dealers. These household chemicals should be kept in their own closet, away from all medicine bottles, to avoid possible accidents, of which we read so often.

Oxalic acid should always be labeled poison; the bleaching agent, chloride of lime, owes its beneficial effect to a substance of an acid nature which is liberated from it, and the clothes bleached by this agent should be thoroughly rinsed in diluted alkali to neutralize this effect. It should be used in solution only, and should be kept in bottles with rubber stoppers. The alkalies which are indispensable in the household are ammonia (that sold at the groceries is often impure), which is very volatile, potash, put up in small cans (caustic lye, from wood ashes), and this is very corrosive in its action, and should be used with great care.—Housekeeper.

Cereals

In the Ladies' Home Journal for May, Mrs. S. T. Rorer says: "Fruits and cereals should form the base of every good breakfast, but cereals are rarely ever well cooked; and if they are cooked any length of time, they are stirred and beaten to a sticky and pasty mass. All cereal foods require the most careful attention at the beginning of cooking. Sprinkle the dry material in rapidly boiling water; do not stir, and do not add the cereal sufficiently fast to stop the boiling. Do this in the upper part of the boiler; let the cereal boil rapidly for five or ten minutes and then sink the boiler down into the under portion that is partly filled with boiling water, and boil continuously for one hour. Starch granules, especially in the cereal grains, are not readily ruptured; a twenty minutes cooking is not long enough to render them wholesome."

There are many people (Mrs. Rorer included) who find that they can not use cereal foods without hurt to them-

selves. This is especially true of those whose habits are sedentary, or whose digestive apparatus is delicate. For the outdoor laborer, or one taking a good deal of exercise of any kind in the open air, well cooked cereals is an excellent food; but physicians do not recommend them as much as they used to do. It is an admitted fact that "what is one man's meat is another man's poison," and no one can say with authority what another should eat. In this matter, each one must be a "law unto himself," finding out what best suits his or her digestive conditions and allowing no one to persuade them to eat of any dish simply because it is supposed to be "good" for you. Find out for yourself if it is.

Asparagus

Asparagus is not so generally grown in the family garden as its merits deserve. Properly grown and prepared for the table, there are few people who do not esteem it a delicacy. The stalks should be grown in a rich bed, and when about four or five inches out of the ground, if their growth is thrifty, they should be cut—not deep enough to bring up the white, tough part, but use only the green, tender lengths. Grown thus it will not require any trimming, but all parts of it will be very tender. Throw into boiling water and cook until tender; salt when nearly done, and drain off the water. For a dressing, beat one heaping teaspoonful of flour with two tablespoonfuls of cream until smooth; add one cupful of rich milk and a lump of butter the size of an egg; pour this over the asparagus and let boil a minute, but do not let it scorch; or, the asparagus may be laid in a hot dish and the hot sauce poured over them, if desired. When the season for the asparagus is nearly over, and green peas are still scarce, a nice dish may be prepared by boiling the two together. In this case, the asparagus should be cut up fine and boiled about fifteen minutes before adding the peas.

Origin of the "Sunshine Society"

During the holidays, several years ago, the now president-general of the society was the recipient of a number of cards from her co-workers on the New York "Record," as well as from outside friends. On Christmas day she protested, and said that, while she enjoyed her gifts, she would have had infinitely more pleasure in their receipt if the donors had not written their names on them. The statement horrified her audience, who, with one accord, exclaimed:

"What! You wouldn't give our presents away, would you?"

"Why not?" was the answer. "What do you do with yours?" A laughing investigation soon developed the fact that the waste basket was the ultimate destination of the most of them; some spent a few months tacked on the walls until fly-specked and discolored; others were used as book-marks until lop-eared; then all were thrown away without having given an additional ray of sunshine to any one beyond their immediate recipient.

"Suppose you take the history of one pretty ten-cent card that came to me a year ago," said the president-general. "It had an exquisite little poem on it, and I enjoyed it so much that I thought at once of an old uncle who would appreciate it, so forwarded it to him. He did enjoy it, and so much that he immediately recalled another friend to whom it would appeal with equal force. So he copied the poem and sent the card on. The recipient found the sentiment so sweet that she, too, felt called upon to pass it on, and before the holidays were over the card had carried its Christmas message to six different persons. Of course, this is an exception, but still it is an example of the possibilities of a gift if accepted in the true spirit and then passed on, giving to each one the double delight of

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The Secret is in the Yeast.

It tells just how to use YEAST FOAM, the wonderful compressed hop yeast that raised the First Grand Prize at the St. Louis Exposition. It makes good bread from any flour.

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both receiving and giving."

Inspired with this idea of sending out remembrances that might be multiplied fourfold, a new set of cards was given the president-general by the staff, and these were immediately sent out again. The thanks received from these cards were so pretty that an item was made of it in the paper. This caused further correspondence, and resulted in a club for the exchange of friendly greetings. The name "Chat" was at first chosen for the column, but in time the membership grew so large that the club badge and a motto "Good Cheer" were selected, and the name "Shut-In" was given to the society. On January 15, 1896, the name of the society was changed to the Sunshine society. The change was made because of conflict with a shut-in society organized in 1884. The club motto and pin remain the same. The object of the society is to incite its members to a performance of kind and helpful deeds, and to thus bring the sunshine of happiness into the greatest possible number of hearts and homes. Its active members are people who are desirous of brightening life by some thought, word or deed. It is not a "charity," but an interchange of kindly greetings and the doing of little acts of kindness whenever it is possible to be done. The membership fees consist merely of some suggestion that will bring sunshine to some one, the exchange of books, papers, pictures, ideas that may be helpful in any way to another, and, in fact, the brushing away of the clouds in any possible manner. If one feels called upon to donate money—which is generally necessary for postage on papers, magazines, and other exchanges, it will be gladly accepted, and used for the spread of the sunshine; but it is not compulsory. Can not we all be "Sunshine" workers, forming little clubs of our own, and "doing good unto others" in some of the many ways which are always cropping out under our hands? Let me hear from you.

VERY IMPORTANT

It is very important that women should avoid constipation. It predisposes and aggravates every symptom of female weakness. Dr. Miles' Nerve and Liver Pills cure Constipation by strengthening the nerves and muscles of the stomach which digest the food. The result is a gentle, natural movement of the bowels. For children they have no equal. At druggists.