The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts Mefford

The Teapot and Teakettle

We are always careful to wash our "cook things." Some of us even use scouring preparations for taking off the stains, both inside and out, of our sauce and stew pans. But how many women, think you, ever think to wash out the teakettle or the teapot? The coffeepot gets a rub and a scald, now and then, but the teakettle only attracts attention when it is crusted with lime. In many homes, the tea or coffee pot is never considered as in need of inside cleaning. Sometimes we get to wondering why "things" do not have a delicate flavor; but the strong, rank taste is more often than not attributed to the tea leaves or the coffee berries. Yet it is such an easy thing to keep the teakettle or the teapot clean, requiring so very little labor! The first time you go to wash your dishes, empty the grounds out of both the coffee and teapot, and put into each, after rinsing well, one tablespoonful of sal soda; fill the pot full of boiling water, and set where it will simmer for half an hour, then pour the solution out. You will be astonished at its color. If the inside does not look bright and shiny, repeat the soda and boiling water for another half hour. With a sharp stick, clean out the angles, and see that the spouts are cleaned, too. If you never have tried it, it will be a revelation. Then when you can do without it, put into the teakettle a handful of the soda, fill with boiling water, if you have it; if not, fill with cold water, and set where it will boil slowly for an hour or two. The result here will be another surprise. But the surprise is a "glad" one. The brown earthenware pot may need cleaning, too, and the boiling soda solution is a good thing for it. Soda is cheap—costing not more than a cent or two a pound—usually selling four pounds for five cents, at the grocer's. Get the sal soda, what is usually known as "washing soda," and keep it in the kitchen all the time. Its uses are endless, seemingly, and once you "get the habit" of having it around, you can not do without it. It must be kept in a dry place, and best shut away from the air, as it "slacks," like lime, when exposed.

"The Emergency Closet"

Nearly all household departments, especially those in the high priced magazines, are conducted on the assumption that the housewife seeking assistance therefrom is well supplied with kitchen conveniences, nearness to markets, plenty of money and at least one maid, and the reader meets with frequent references to the "well stocked emergency closet," to be drawn upon at every emergency. But the majority of housewives who look to the printed page for information are those who do their work with their own hands, who have to struggle to make the usually limited income balance with the expense account, and who depend upon the day's or week's supplies, no matter what the extra demand may be. Many of them live far from the market, and if unexpected company does come, the extra dishes must be concocted from the materials on hand, or within their limited purchasing means. Women in the cities whose household bring in a regular sum, can plan ahead for the necessities, and depend upon the nearby markets for the extras of the moment. Hence, even without a maid, a respectable meal may be served on short notice, without any great outlay of money or time. If it can be done, it is best to have a supply of certain things at hand, by means of which an extra plate may be filled if needed, but these extras cost money, and if at all perishable, may not be used often enough to pay for their keeping. It is better policy for the young housewife, or the woman who must keep her household on a carefully counted expenditure to try promising recipes for new methods of serving the old standbys, and especially those that teach ways and means of using up left-overs, or small quantities and study ways and means of making even the plain, homely fare that is usually served to the family, so attractive that its "commonness" will not be noticeable. Remember, the "dinner of herbs," served with a cordial welcome, would be far more agreeable to the guest of the moment than the thought that her coming has distressed, or "put you out," because of her having, as it were, thrust herself upon your hospitality without timely warning.

AN OLD AND WELL TRIED REMEDY

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP for children teething should always be used for children while teething. It softens the gums, allays the pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty-five cents a bottle.

Some Oyster Lore

Oysters are sold as "solids," or "liquids." The solids have very little juice in them, while the liquids are sold with the juice, and not infrequently water is added to the juice to fill up the measure. Oysters that are sold by the dozen are of several grades. The largest oysters, and the most expensive, are called "counts," and are used for frying, broiling, or stuffing. The next size are called "selects," and in some markets are called culls; oysters taken as they come, small and large, are called "straights," while the smallest oysters are sold for stewing, and sauces, and are called "stewing oysters." In cooking oysters, the seasonings should be few, and of the most delicate kinds, and the oysters should be barely heated through, so the edges will curl; too long cooking ruins the flavor and renders them tough.

For sauteing oysters, drain two dozen large oysters and season with pepper and salt and roll in fine bread crumbs or corn meal, as liked. Have two ounces (four tablespoonfuls) of clarified butter in a cup, and set the cup in a pan of boiling hot (not boiling) water, and leave until melted. Put half the butter in the skillet and let get very hot; then put enough of the seasoned oysters in the skillet to cover the bottom of the pan, and turn as they brown, but be careful not to scorch; when both sides are browned, lift and lay on hot toast, put the remainder of the butter in the skillet and cook the rest of the oysters in the same way.

For cooking in the chafing dish, put into the dish one solid pint of oysters, two tablespoonfuls of butter, one scant teaspoonful of salt, and a dash of cayenne. Light the lamp and cook the oysters, stirring often until they curl on the edges, when they must be served at once on buttered toast.

For oyster soup, for six dishes, one quart each of oysters and fresh milk, and one pint of water, three tablespoonfuls of flour, four of butter, half a teaspoonful of pepper, a slip of onion, a bit of mace; turn the oysters into a colander over a bowl, and stir until drained; set oysters in a cold place; put water and oyster liquid over the fire, heating slowly. When it comes to a boiling point, skim and set where it will keep hot. Have two-thirds of the milk, the onion and mace over the fire in a double boiler; mix the flour smooth in the rest of the milk, and stir into the boiling milk, cooking for ten minutes; strain out onion and mace; let oyster water come to the boiling point, then stir in the thickened milk, add oysters, butter, salt and pepper; let come to boiling point, stirring, and serve at once.

Fashion Notes

Plain gored skirts are among the most popular and serviceable of the winter fashions. The new models all show, more or less, the graceful lines of the circular skirt, though the advent of the sheath style has had a tendency to affect the width of other designs, making them all narrower than for several seasons past.

Velvet, satins, buttons and braid are all used as trimmings in this season's styles. Laces showing an intermingling of metal threads are very fashionable.

Flounces presenting any fullness are, for the moment, quite out of style. What is known as the flat flounce, which is placed quite plain on the skirt, is sometimes seen; the bottom is generally scalloped, and it is in this style that lace flounces are applied.

Tucks are far more fashionable, either appliqued, as in nun's gowns, or constructed in the material of the skirt itself. The strong feature in belts is the sash effect, many of the models being made of broad ribbon finished with fringe or tassel ends. Other models show the girdle style, the sash drapery being mounted on bone foundation and the sash ends falling from a rosette or cockade ornament.

Full length sleeves are shown in tailored suits, and tailor made shirt waists; both the fitting dress sleeve and the full length shirt sleeve with cuff-band are used. In the costume waist some will cling to the half and three-quarter length, but the newest mode is unquestionably the full length, close fitting sleeve.

The basques of some of the new jackets are weighted, and hems of skirts are lined with heavy but quite limp linen. Skirts are rarely lined, but are generally supplemented with a taffeta self-colored underskirt mounted on the same band as the dress skirt.

Buttons are much used, either as fasteners or for ornamental purposes. The crochet button is mostly seen. Other large buttons are ornamented with a passementerie star in their center. The fabric buttons are often surrounded with a quilling of satin or ribbon.—McCall's Magazine.

For the Toilet

When one does housework, it is almost impossible to keep the hands free from stain, dust, and oftentimes actual dirt; and if improperly washed, they will soon become rough and unsightly. When the work is done, before washing the hands, take a lump of grease—clean lard, mutton-tallow will do—and rub thoroughly into the pores, just as you would use soap. Have a basin of quite warm water, but not hot, and use a mild vegetable oil soap and wash thoroughly, using a little corn meal with the soap and when clean, rinse in cold water and wipe dry; dip the hands into a little vinegar to kill any remaining alkali from the soap, and this will help to whiten the hands and make them smooth. When dry, rub into the pores a very little cold cream—the least little bit. To make doubly sure, dust the hands with a little powdered French chalk. This should particularly be done every night before going to bed—the washing, application of cold cream, and thorough rubbing.

It is well to teach the little ones how to treat their own "chaps." Let them have a bit of cocoa butter (five cents worth will last a long time) or a lump of nice mutton tallow, and put this into a little tin can that can be covered. When washing the hands and face, set the can in a vessel containing boiling hot water, and it will melt the fat. Do not neglect, after the hands are well washed, to dip them into a little vinegar, which may smart a little, but is healing, then dip the fingertips in the melted fat and rub it well into the skin of the hands, face and neck. A very little will do, and it must be well rubbed in. A healing and bleaching lotion for hands is made of equal parts of cologne, strained honey and lemon juice. Rub well into the skin after washing.

A mouth wash that will help keep the teeth nice is one tablespoonful of powdered borax dissolved in one pint of boiling water, to which when cold, add one ounce of myrrah and five drops of thymol. Use one teaspoonful of this mixture to half a glass of water, and wash the mouth after eating, and on going to bed.

For the Laundry

For delicate fabrics, grease spots may be treated with naptha, as it leaves no marking, which turpentine, chloroform and ether sometimes do. Do not use naptha in a room where there is any fire or flame.

For removing the stain of shoes from white stockings, put half an ounce of oxalic acid crystals in one pint of water; let dissolve, and apply to the stain, rinse at once, and repeat until the discoloration disappears, then wash very thoroughly to remove the acid.

For washing flannels and delicate materials, shave very thinly a half pound of any good, white soap and pour over it a quart of boiling water. Keep simmering until the soap is all dissolved, then pour into a jar or vessel for use. It will form a stiff jelly as it cools, but is easily thinned in warm water. Use as much of this jelly as is necessary to clean the articles washed, adding to each gallon of water one tablespoonful of household ammonia. Wash woolens early in the day that they may get thoroughly dry at one hanging. Woolens must not be allowed to freeze.

When washing lace curtains, put into the rinse water a solution made by pouring one quart of boiling water over one large tablespoonful of borax. This will whiten, and also help to stiffen.

A very good thing to use in starch is one tablespoonful of borax to each pint of well boiled starch before thinning. Stir well until the powder

A CARD

This is to certify that all druggists are authorized to refund your money if Foley's Honey and Tar fails to cure your cough or cold. It stops the cough, heals the lungs and prevents serious results from a cold. Cures la grippe coughs and prevents pneumonia and consumption. Contains no opiates. The genuine is in a yellow package. Refuse substitutes.—Advertisement.