



CONDUCTED BY LAURA LATHROP.

HOUSE CLEANING.

THE stirring winds of Spring have already been busy helping to clear away the accumulations of Winter for Nature's glorious spread of emerald carpet, with its bright weavings of gaily-tinted flowers. The bright sunshine brings to view deposits of dust, cobwebs, etc., making the most thorough housekeeper wonder if dirt, like original sin, is not unavoidably omnipresent. Each room may have had its weekly sweeping and dusting, the closets, pantry and cellar may have been subjected to the most careful supervision, and yet we find a stern necessity for the semi-annual recurrence of house cleaning, and visions of brooms, scrubbing-brushes, and the various paraphernalia attendant flit before our mind.

It is better, in northern latitudes, not to begin this work too soon, for cold rainy days, with fireless rooms, are not conducive to the health, happiness or comfort of husband and children. Better wait until the middle of May, when the weather is sufficiently warm to allow the house to be thrown open without the added dread of neuralgias, coughs, rheumatism, etc. We shall still have abundance of time to complete our work, put in our screens, and have everything polished to the "pink of perfection" before the flies make their appearance.

Before beginning, sit calmly down, and, like a successful general, plan your campaign. Occupy at least a week in making little repairs, providing tools, soap, sawdust, carpet tacks, spirits of ammonia, naphtha, etc. Have everything that is soiled (including curtains that will bear laundering), washed and ironed during this week. Give your attention next to the closets, pantries, etc. This is no small part of the work and will pay double returns in the rapidity and satisfaction with which the general house cleaning will be accomplished. Each closet and wardrobe must be emptied of its contents; boxes must be emp-

tyed and assorted, contents carefully examined for fear of moths; clothing thoroughly shaken and aired on the clothes-line. Carefully dust the shelves, wipe with a damp cloth, and cover with paper (tar paper if you can get it), as it is a moth preventive. It is a good article in which to envelop furs and woollens. These should first be beaten, then aired and, after wrapping in the paper, be sewed up in paper or linen bags or laid away in boxes, having a strip of paper pasted over the edge of the cover to prevent the entrance of the moth. Examine again in July to make assurance doubly sure. Articles of a kind should be placed in labeled boxes or bags. Rubbish that you are positive will never be used should be promptly disposed of. Aim to keep your closets *free* from rubbish, for herein lies the secret of neatness easily attained.

Sweep the floors and wash them with hot water in which a liberal supply of borax has been dissolved. Pour naphtha freely about the casings and cracks in the floor, being careful never to use it with a lighted lamp or fire in the room—the odor will soon escape through the open windows. Persian insect powder may be blown into the crevices, using a small pair of bellows furnished for the purpose. Insect powder combined with cayenne pepper is useful, when blown into the crevices about pantry shelves and floors, as a preventive of the ravages of mice and insects. While cleaning the kitchen closets and pantry, baking pans, sauce pans, and the various articles of tin ware which usually need brightening, should be plunged into a boiler of hot water to which washing soda has been added, proportions for which have been given before. Do not scour baking tins as it causes the contents to stick to the pan when baking, making them very troublesome to remove and ruining their appearance. Pantry shelves should be neatly covered with paper or oil cloth. Oil

cloth should be washed with skimmed sweet milk, and immediately wiped dry with a soft woolen cloth.

By the time the work enumerated has been accomplished, the greater part of the week will have slipped away, and it will be well to remember the old adage, "As we travel through life let us live by the way." This may be construed in various ways, and we will adapt it to the subject in hand by providing well for the "inner man." It will lighten your labor for the coming week, and your husband will not feel that the term home is a misnomer, and that he is driven to seek his sustenance elsewhere. So on Saturday bake a liberal supply of bread, add a quantity of plain cake, so that you may have sufficient for the greater part of the following week. Hot gems for breakfast are quickly compounded and baked, and aid materially in lengthening out the bread supply. The recipe for eggless cake given in the February number affords a cheap and wholesome cake, easily made and a good keeper. Plain sponge cake is easily made, quickly baked, and will always prove a success if the recipe we append is strictly followed. Boil a large supply of beef, either fresh or corned; it will form the basis for a variety of palatable dishes easily and quickly made, recipes for which were given in previous numbers. Beef or mutton may be roasted, and when wanted placed on roast rings in a flat-bottomed kettle, with just enough water to escape reaching the meat, add a few pared potatoes, cover tight, and by the time the potatoes are done the meat will be heated through and will be hardly distinguishable from fresh roast. Care must be taken to supply water if needed. When potatoes are done, add the gravy from the roast and you have a substantial dinner with the smallest possible expenditure of time. The Graham pudding given in April number is an excellent one for busy days when a constant fire is kept up, being wholesome, substantial and economical.

Make Sunday following truly a day of rest. On Monday let the first point of attack be the cellar. Have a man to assist you, and let all boxes and barrels be carried up stairs and into the backyard to be swept, rinsed and dried before returning to their accustomed place. Remove all traces of vegetables with the earth used in storage, or they will prove formidable

enemies to the health of your family, their poisonous exhalations finding their way through the floor and penetrating the remotest sleeping apartment. Sweep thoroughly overhead and down the sides as well as the floor. Now give a good coating of white-wash, to which a liberal amount of copperas dissolved in hot water has been added. No danger of getting too much. Even a washing and sprinkling with copperas water is very beneficial. The windows must be thrown open until the cellar is perfectly dry. Finish by washing down the cellar stairs, and you will experience a feeling of infinite satisfaction that the part most dreaded has been accomplished while you are fresh and strong, and the refuse from the cellar will not need be carried out through parts already cleaned. Now begin at the top of the house and work downward, leaving everything clean and complete as you go. If you have an attic, sort out everything under the head of rubbish and burn. Look over old clothing, shaking, airing, and packing carefully that which is worth preserving. Clean your floor with hot water. Sprinkle freely with naphtha. Use plenty of tobacco and camphor in boxes of woolen articles, that your attic may not become a breeding place for moths, to infest other parts of the house more carefully cared for. Now take one room at a time, that the whole house may not be in disorder, adding discouragement to your labor. First, take down curtains; shake them and air thoroughly; take down picture frames, bric-à-brac, etc., clean perfectly and put away in the closets until the room is in order. Take up carpet; fold by carrying one side over to the opposite one, laying it down carefully to prevent dust or straw from getting on the upper side; carry it out and hang on the line with the under side out; beat well, then spread out and sweep the upper side. Returning to the room, scatter dampened sawdust or dampened bran over the floor and sweep up the dust. Treat your floor as directed for closets, and proceed to wash the wood work and windows, using hot soft water to which you have added a tablespoonful of spirits of ammonia for every gallon of water. Do not use soap as it is liable to damage the paint. Wring a soft cloth nearly dry from this water, that none may drip over the floor, as it causes needless labor and delay. Go over a whole casing or door

at a time, rubbing rapidly and thoroughly, and follow up with a soft, dry cloth, beginning to dry the wood where you began to wash. Proceed in the same way with the windows, washing one sash at a time and polishing, after they are dried, with soft newspaper or tissue paper. If the windows and doors have been left open, and you have been careful to spill no water, by this time the floor will be dry enough for the carpet, which tack down smoothly, sprinkle well with damp coarse salt, and sweep with a new broom before arranging the furniture. Upholstered pieces should have been well beaten in the open air and then wiped with a clean cloth slightly dampened. Mattresses should be thoroughly beaten if not sent away to be cleansed. The lifting and putting down again of carpets is the heaviest part of the work, and we readily see the discomfort and confusion that must arise from having several up at once. Carpets may be made to last longer if, when showing wear in the middle of the room, they are ripped and the middle breadths placed next the wall, and *vice versa*. Worn places may be neatly darned with ravelings from the carpet. These should be saved when it is new. Faded carpets may be brightened by sponging lightly with ammonia water, and those much soiled may be nicely cleaned with luke-warm soft water to which ox gall is added in the proportion of one part gall to three of water, passing over the surface a cloth wrung nearly dry from this mixture and following with a dry one.

Before storing stoves for the summer, give them a coating of kerosene oil to prevent rusting. Furniture may be nicely polished by rubbing with sweet oil to which one-half its quantity of turpentine is added. Carpets which have not been used enough to justify taking up, may be freed from moths by spreading along the edges and seams a cloth wrung from hot water and passing a hot iron over it until dry. Painting and papering, when necessary, are better postponed until fall, after flies and insects have taken leave and during the steady pleasant weather of October

An Easy Dinner for a Busy Day.

WHILE getting breakfast, place on the stove a piece of nice veal, or a chicken cut up into joints; let simmer until tender; season nicely with butter, pepper and salt; add a tablespoonful of flour rubbed into the same of butter, and fifteen minutes before serving drop in, by the spoonful, the dumplings, as given below. Cover tight and boil steadily for fifteen minutes, without uncovering, when they will be found feathery-light and delicious.

DUMPLINGS.—Two teacupfuls of best flour, rounded measure, sifted with two large teaspoonfuls of Royal Baking Powder, a teaspoonful of sugar, and half a teaspoonful of salt. Make a dough of this by adding three-fourths of a teacupful of sweet milk or cold water. Always use the same size of teacup for measuring everything in a recipe. An ordinary teacup (such as is used in cookery) contains sixteen tablespoonfuls. For three-fourths of a cup, simply fill the cup and dip out four tablespoonfuls. This recipe is unfailing if the kettle is kept boiling and tightly covered.

PLAIN SPONGE CAKE.—Beat the yolks of four eggs together with two cups of granulated sugar; stir in, a little at a time, one teacup of sifted flour; then the stiffly beaten whites of four eggs; next a teacupful of flour, sifted with two teaspoonfuls of best baking powder. Last of all, stir in three-fourths of a teacupful of boiling water, adding a little at a time. Squeeze in the juice of a lemon, add a pinch of salt, and, no matter how thin the mixture may appear, do not add any more flour. Bake in square, shallow tins, in moderate oven, for twenty minutes, a little more or less, according to oven. Test with a straw. This is unfailing if directions are followed and oven is right. Avoid moving, jarring, or banging the oven door.

This department is open to queries, and correspondence on domestic topics. All communications should be plainly written, one side of the paper only.

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