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No. 9.

THE
FAMILY RECEIPT BOOK;

A SELECTION OF

RECEIPTS, ADVICES, AND DIRECTIONS,

RELATIVE TO

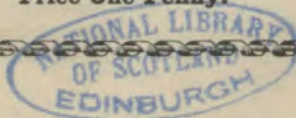
HOUSEKEEPING, CLEANING, &c.,

FROM THE MOST APPROVED SOURCES.

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1881



THE FAMILY RECEIPT BOOK.

THE CHOICE OF A HOUSE.

There are several important matters to be taken into consideration in making choice of a house. In the first place, take care that it is not damp. Dampness may arise from many causes, but imperfect drainage, and close contact of the floors with the ground, are the principal. When a house is damp in any part, by all means avoid it, for it may produce the most pernicious effects on the health of your family. Secondly, see that the house has a free open exposure for fresh air, and, if all other circumstances suit, prefer that which has an exposure to the south, for you will then have the beneficial influence of the sun's rays. Thirdly, ascertain if there be a plentiful supply of good water in the premises, and if there be proper means at hand for drying and bleaching clothes. Fourthly, learn whether the vents go well, and do not smoke. There are other inquiries you should also make, such as freedom from vermin, &c., but these are left to your own judgment.

FURNISHINGS.

When about to furnish a house, take care to set out on a right principle in the selection of articles. Neatness, and a pleasing effect to the eye, require that there should be a harmony of colours, and a similarity of style in the main articles of furniture. Therefore, you must exercise a little taste and judgment in your *first* selections, if you wish to avoid committing a blunder which will cost you much subsequent annoyance. For example, let the tints of the carpet, of the paper or paint of the walls, and of the window curtains, be all in harmony in each room—that is, either possess a general resemblance of colour, or various colours in pleasing contrast with each other. Carpets being the most expensive articles, it is safest to buy them first, and then to let their colour lead the tone and style of hearthrugs, curtains, paper-hangings, &c. It is also an economical plan to buy carpets of the same patten

for several rooms, because, in the event of removal to a house with different sized apartments, a piece of one carpet may be taken to eke out another.

TABLES, CHAIRS, &c.

When ordering tables, chairs, and other wooden articles of a fine quality, take care to specify that they must be of a solid fabric, and not veneered. Veneering is only tolerable in a few articles which are not to be subjected to much tear and wear; nevertheless, a practice has begun of veneering articles in daily use, such as chairs and tables, and consequently they are soon destroyed. Examine closely the back and seat-frames of every mahogany chair, and reject it if it be veneered. In ordering sofas, you should also take care to bargain for genuine hair stuffing, for in many instances the stuffing is composed of what is technically called *pob*, or a composition of tow, wool, and other kinds of rubbish.

EARTHENWARE AND CHINA.

In purchasing your china and earthenware articles for the table, take care to select sets which, in case of breakage, can at all times and in all places be easily matched. If you buy table ware of a peculiar or rare pattern, and afterwards break several pieces, you may find it impossible to replace them. Thus a particular set of earthenware or china, however beautiful and cheap, may ultimately prove a source of great annoyance and no little expense.

PLATE.

Whatever silver articles you buy, let them be of a genuine kind, or of sterling silver plate, which always keeps its value, however old and worn it may become. Avoid all plated goods, for the plating soon wears off, and then the article is valueless. If you cannot afford to purchase sterling silver plate, your most economical plan, consistent with elegance of appearance, will be to get a few articles of German silver. This is properly the metal called *nickel*, and closely resembles sterling silver in texture and colour. In hardness and durability, it is superior to sterling silver, and its price is only about a tenth of what genuine plate would cost. German silver is now manufactured to a large extent in England, and is made into spoons, forks, ladles, tea-pots, salvers, dish-covers, and all other articles for the table. The articles in Britannia metal, such as tea-pots, coffee-pots, &c. should be of a durable fabric, and always kept well scoured.

GRATES.

In choosing grates for your rooms, do not buy those which have burnished steel fronts, as they require more care in cleaning, and are liable to rust during summer when not in use. The best and neatest, as well as the cheapest, grates, are those which are made of cast iron, and of an ornamental pattern. Let the grates which you select be small or of moderate size in the fire-place. Wide, open grates, by admitting cold air into the chimney, are exceedingly liable to smoke.

GILDING.

Order all the gilding of your picture frames and other articles to be done in oil: it is infinitely more durable, and will wash when soiled.

HOUSEKEEPING AND CLEANING.

Every good housewife should keep a regular and continuous account of her income and expenditure. This is a very essential part of domestic duty, and should not be neglected. When properly set about, there is little or no trouble in keeping the household accounts; and for the guidance of young housewives, with whom frugality should be an object, we beg to suggest the following simple plan of keeping them:—Procure a small slate-book—that is, a little book composed of three slates, bound in a plain cover. This, which you write upon with a slate pencil, is your *day-book*; it is always at hand for you to scroll down any note of outlay, and will keep several days' or a week's accounts at a time. At any leisure moment, you carry the entries of outlay from the slates to a small ruled paper book, which is your *ledger*. One page of this is devoted to money received, and the opposite page to money paid out. By doing this regularly, and comparing the entries of sums received with the entries of sums expended, so as to see that they square with each other, you will find that you possess a complete record of family expenses, satisfactory alike to yourself and to your husband, should he make any inquiry into the subject. The keeping of an account of receipts and disbursements, in this or any other convenient manner, is calculated to check the tendency to over-expenditure, or living beyond the means. Guard against the practice of buying on credit, and running up bills with tradesmen. If you can at all avoid taking credit, do so; for by paying for every article with ready money, you possess two decided advantages—you get every thing cheaper as you want it, and you can go anywhere to seek out the best markets.

SERVANTS.

The practice of hiring domestic servants for six months at once has partly given place to engagements of one month. It is better that the term hired for at the first should be short, and if both parties are pleased, a re-engagement can easily be made afterwards. In this manner there is no vexatious obligations to keep together, and a separation can always take place amicably. Many servants remain years in a place, though hired on the understanding that it is only from month to month, or, what is the same thing, hired for no fixed period, but just so long as both parties agree; and that, in the event of any dissatisfaction, there shall be a week or a month's warning given to leave.

A good mistress generally makes a good servant. She endeavours to seek out and attach a good servant to herself. She effects this attachment and good-will by simply laying before the servant her line of duties, or what is expected of her, and then leaving her to execute these duties in a regular methodic manner. No servant likes to be interfered with in her work, or to be called away from one thing to do another; nevertheless, some mistresses are not happy unless they are going in and out of the kitchen, or bustling up and down the house, ordering and counter-ordering or in some other way worrying the servant out of all patience. We advise the young housewife to prescribe to her servants, in plain terms, the duties which she expects they will daily and regularly execute; and if the servants are unfit to perform them, it is better for both that there should be a separation. Where two or more servants are engaged, the precise duties of each should be expressly defined, in order to prevent disputes between them, and that the work of the house may be duly and properly-performed.

WOODEN FLOORS,

If kept in order by daily sweeping and other small attentions, may be effectually cleaned by washing them with warm water and soap; but if spots of grease are to be removed, the spots must be previously taken out by fuller's earth. Ink spots may be discharged with spirits of salt. The floors of bedrooms should be washed as seldom as possible. It is most dangerous to the health of the person who occupies the bedroom to wash or scour it, unless the weather be fine, to allow the window to be opened for thoroughly drying the room before night. A damp mop may, when necessary, be passed lightly over the floor.

CARPETS.

Ordinary Kidderminster carpets can only be cleaned by shaking and beating; if cleaned by means of washing, they become so soft as to be speedily dirtied again, and their appearance is spoiled. Brussels carpets may be cleaned as follows:—Take them up and shake and beat them, so as to render them perfectly free from dust. Have the floor thoroughly scoured and dry, and nail the carpet firmly down upon it. Take a pailful of clean cold spring water, and put into it about three gills of oxgall. Take another pail with clean cold water only. Now, rub with a soft scrubbing brush some of the oxgall water on the carpet, which will raise a lather. When a convenient sized portion is done, wash the lather off with a clean linen cloth dipped in the clean water. Let this water be changed frequently. When all the lather has disappeared, rub the part with a clean dry cloth. After all is done, open the window to allow the carpet to dry. A carpet treated in this manner will be greatly refreshed in colour, particularly the greens. In laying carpets, cover the floor beneath them with large sheets of paper, to prevent dust from rising between the boards. A carpet lasts longer by adopting this precaution.

OIL-CLOTHS.

Oil or painted cloths should be laid only on dry floors; if the floor be damp, the cloth will soon mildew and rot. Such cloths, laid even in the driest situation, should be wetted as little as possible. When to be cleaned, they should be wiped with a wet cloth, and rubbed gently till dry.

MARBLE HEARTHS AND CHIMNEY PIECES

May be cleaned as follows:—Mix a gill of soap lees, half a gill of turpentine, and a bullock's gall, and make them into a paste with pipe-clay, which lay upon the marble, and let it remain a day or two, then rub it off, and the stains will have disappeared, unless they are of long standing, when the paste must be again applied. Polished marble requires careful treatment, as any acid will destroy the polish. In general, warm water and soap will be found the safest thing for cleaning chimney pieces.

WALLS OF HOUSES.

The outer surfaces of walls, formed of brick or sandstone, sometimes imbibe moisture from the atmosphere, and this gives a dampness to the interior. If it be found unsuitable to plaster and white-wash the outside, the damp may be greatly

prevented by painting the walls with a single coat of oil-paint, which, by being light in colour, will give a neat and clean effect.

WALLS OF ROOMS.

When walls of rooms or staircases are to be painted in oil, let the paint be of the best description. It is not unusual for inferior tradesmen to use whiting, instead of white lead, as a pigment; by this deception, the paint will afterwards scarcely endure washing. Supposing, however, that the paint has been of the best kind, considerable care will be required in cleaning it. The safest and most simple plan is to take a pail of hot water and put into it as much common yellow or soft soap as will raise a lather or froth. Now wash the walls well with a flannel cloth dipped in this water; then wash this soapy water off with clean flannel and clean warm water. Dry with a clean linen cloth. Do all this equally, so as not to leave smears or parts better washed or wiped than others.

PAPER HANGING.

Paper hanging should be first dusted and then cleaned by a stale loaf of bread, with the crumb surface cut smoothly, and gently rubbed, the dirty face of the bread being cut away from time to time. The imitative marble-paper, highly varnished, may be washed with cold water and soap. PAPIER MACHE, now much used for mouldings and ornaments in rooms, may be cleaned with soap and water.

PICTURE FRAMES.

Picture frames of varnished or French-polished wood may be washed with soap and warm water, and sponge or flannel. Frames which are gilt in the ordinary manner, or "water-gilt," cannot endure washing or rubbing; but if "oil-gilt," they may be washed with cold water and a soft brush.

IVORY.

Ivory may be restored to its original whiteness by cleaning it with a paste of burnt pumice-stone and water, and then placing it under glasses in the sun's rays.

BRASS INITIAL WORK.

This is best cleaned as follows:—Mix tripoli and linsced oil, and dip into it a rubber of hat, with which polish the work. If the wood be ebony or rosewood, polish it with a little finely-powdered elder-ashes; or make a paste of rottenstone, a little starch, sweet oil, and oxalic acid, mixed with

water. The ornaments of a French clock are, however, best cleaned with bread-crumbs, carefully rubbed, so as not to spoil the wood work. Ormolu candlesticks, lamps, and branches, may be cleaned with soap and water. They will bear more cleaning than lacquered articles, which are spoiled by frequent rubbing, or by acids, or strong alkalies.

WINDOWS AND LOOKING-GLASSES.

Dip a moistened rag or flannel into indigo, fuller's earth, ashes, or rotten-stone, in impalpable powder, with which smear the glass, and wipe off with a dry soft cloth. Powder-blue or whiting, tied up in muslin, and dusted upon the glass, and cleaned off with chamois leather, also gives glass a fine polish. The spots in the silvering of old looking-glasses are caused by damp at the back. Window-panes may be made to resemble ground glass by daubing them with putty, or a brush with a little thin paste.

BRASS AND COPPER.

Brass and copper are best cleaned with sweet oil and tripoli, powdered bath-brick, rotten-stone, or red brick-dust, rubbed on with flannel and polished with leather. A strong solution of oxalic acid in water gives brass a fine colour. Vitriol and spirits of salts soon make brass and copper very bright, but they very soon tarnish, and consequently require more frequent cleaning. A strong ley of roche-alum and water will also improve brass.

GRATES AND STOVES.

Grates and stoves are cleaned with black lead mixed with turpentine, or with stale beer and yellow soap, and polished off. The finer lead is used dry in lump or powder. The bronzed work of stoves should be only lightly brushed. Rottenstone, or fine emery and sweet oil, is used for the bright work of stoves and polished fire-irons; the higher the latter are polished, the less likely are they to rust. To prevent rust in articles not often used, rub them with sweet oil, and dust over them fine lime; or with the following mixture:—To a quart of cold water, add half a pound of quicklime; let it stand until the top is clear, when pour off the liquid and stir up with it some olive oil, until it becomes of a pasty consistence, when it should be rubbed on the metal articles to be preserved. To fill cracks in stove backs, make a paste of wood ashes, salt, and water. To remove rust, mix tripoli, sulphur, and sweet oil, and clean the articles with it; or mix boiled soft soap with emery No. 3, which will also discharge the fire marks

from bright bars. Steel work may also be kept from rust by varnishing it with turpentine in which is dissolved a small proportion of India rubber. Polished fire-irons may be best preserved from rust by being closely wrapped up in strong brown paper.

KITCHEN VESSELS.

The crust on boilers and kettles, arising from the hard water boiled in them, may be prevented by keeping in the vessel a marble, or a potato tied in a piece of linen. Tin plate vessels are cleanly and convenient, but unless dried after washing, will soon rust in holes. Iron coal-scoops are liable to rust from the damp of the coals. The tinning of copper saucepans must be kept perfectly clean and dry, in which case they may be used with safety. Copper pans, if put away damp, or a boiling-copper, if left wet, will become coated with poisonous crust, or verdigris. Untinned copper or brass vessels, even if scoured bright and clean, are always dangerous. If made dishes be allowed to cool and stand in copper vessels, the articles will become poisonous. In the year 1837, a lady and her family, residing in Paris, were poisoned by partaking of a stew which had been allowed to stand and get cold in a copper pan. A German saucepan is best for boiling milk in. This is an iron saucepan, glazed with white earthenware instead of being tinned, the glaze preventing its tendency to burn. A stewpan made like it is also preferable to a copper pan, since simple washing keeps it sweet and clean. A method of glazing saucepans with earthenware has lately been the object of a patent in England. Zinc sieves are more easily kept clean than those made of hair, will last longer, and not rust.

KNIVES.

Knives are best cleaned by rubbing on a flat board covered with leather, on which is put finely powdered brick-dust. Never put knives in hot water, for that loosens the handles and spoils the temper of the steel. For simple cleaning after use, wipe them only with a damp and then with a dry cloth.

LAMP GLASSES.

If the lamp glasses be ground, burnt spots upon them cannot be removed, but they may be cleaned from the effects of smoke by washing with soap and water, and then rubbed with a dry cloth. The glasses should always be ground on the outside.

FURNITURE.

Mahogany furniture is always best cleaned by continual rubbing; and no ordinary stuff that may be applied will com-

penstate the want of this requisite.—Some furniture is what is called “French polished;” but this French polish is an unguent possessed and applied only by cabinet-makers, and readily to be had by housekeepers. In ordinary circumstances, therefore, the furniture must be well rubbed, and with some easily procurable material. The following are the materials we suggest:—Take a gill and a half of unboiled linseed oil, one gill of turpentine, and a tea-spoonful of pounded loaf sugar. Shake all well together, and rub a portion on the furniture with a piece of flannel, and polish with a linen-cloth.

An oil for darkening furniture may be made as follows:—Mix in one pint of linseed oil an ounce of powdered rose-pink, to which add one ounce of alkanet root, beaten in a metal mortar; let the mixture stand in a warm place for a few days, when the substances will have settled, and the oil, of a deep rich colour, may be poured off for use: or mix one ounce of alkanet root, four ounces of shell-lac varnish, two ounces of turpentine, and the same quantity of scraped bees’ wax, with a pint of linseed oil; and when they have stood a week, the mixture will be ready for use.

Furniture paste is made by scraping a quarter of a pound of bees’-wax into half a pint of turpentine, and letting it stand to dissolve. This will keep the wood light. If, however, a quarter of a pint of linseed oil be added to the above, the composition will darken the wood. Another paste, useful for very light wood, is made as follows:—In a quart of hot water dissolve six ounces of pearl-ash, add a quarter of a pound of white wax, and simmer the whole for half an hour in a pipkin; take it off the fire, and when it has cooled, the wax will float upon the surface, and should be worked in a mortar, with a little hot water, into a soft paste. With this, furniture may be highly polished, as may also marble chimney-pieces. It is necessary to mention, that furniture cleaned with paste has the disadvantage of receiving heat-marks more readily than if polished with linseed-oil, which, however, requires more time and labour. In any case, the furniture should be cleansed from grease and stains before polishing is attempted; and this may be done by washing the wood with hot beer, or with soap and water. The safest way to heat furniture paste or oil is to place the vessel containing it in another holding boiling water upon the fire.

A fine varnish for mahogany or other furniture may be thus made:—Put into a bottle two ounces of gum-sandrac, one ounce of shell-lac, half an ounce of mastic, half an ounce of gum-benjamin, one ounce of Venice turpentine, and a pint of spirits of wine. Colour red with dragon’s blood, or yellow

with saffron. Let it stand in a warm place until the gums are dissolved, when strain it for use.

VARNISHING.

Before new furniture is varnished, it should have a coat of boiled oil, (if wished to be darkened,) or linseed oil, and be left a day or two to harden; or a thin size, made from ising-glass or gum-tragacanth, dissolved in water, or very thin glue, is used; so that the pores of the wood be filled up, and both varnish and time be thus saved. A good varnish may be made by dissolving eight ounces of white wax and half an ounce of yellow rosin in a pint of spirits of turpentine.

BOTTLES.

Cut a raw potato into small pieces, and put them in the bottle along with a table-spoonful of salt, and two table-spoonfuls of water. Shake all well together in the bottle till every mark is removed, and rinse with clean water. This will remove stains of wine, green marks of vegetation, and other discolourations. Hard crust in bottles may be cleaned off by rinsing with water and small shot. Take care to wash out all the shot before putting the bottles aside.

PLATE.

Articles of plate, after being used, should be washed in hot water, or, if stained, they should be boiled, and rinsed and dried before you attempt to clean them. They should be carefully handled, else they may receive deep scratches, which are very difficult to remove. Besides, the object is not merely to clean the plate, but to polish it, so that it may appear almost as brilliant as when it was received new from the silversmith. For this purpose quicksilver was formerly much used in plate-powder, and it gave the silver great lustre, which soon, however, disappeared, and the article became tarnished and blackened.

The best plate-powder consists of dried and finely-sifted whiting or chalk. The greater part of the whiting sold in the shops is coarse trash, unfit for rubbing upon plate, and great care must be taken to procure the finest London whiting, which will not scratch.

Brushes, hard and soft, sponge, and wash leather, are requisites for cleaning plate; if the powder be mixed with spirits of wine laid on with a sponge, and rubbed off with wash-leather, all tarnish will be removed. Salt stains (blackish spots) and sulphur marks from eggs are more difficult to remove. It is a good plan to boil a soft fine old cloth in water with some prepared chalk dissolved in it, and to dry

the cloth, and use it for polishing. The soft brush is for the same purpose, the hard brush being for chased work, edges, and crests, so that not a portion of dry powder may remain in them. Plate should in all cases be finished with a fine dry wash-leather.

Plated articles should be carefully wiped dry after washing them, else they will rust or canker at the edges, where the silver first wears off; and on this account, also, they should be cleaned as rarely as possible. German silver may be cleaned in the same manner as plate.

FLANNEL OR WOOLLEN ARTICLES.

Wash them quickly with warm water, with soap. Wring and shake them well, and hang them up to dry. Do not let them lie wet. The more quickly they are dried, the less likely are they to shrink.

SILKS.

No silks look well after washing, however carefully it be done, and should therefore never be resorted to but from absolute necessity. We have seen it recommended to sponge faded silks with warm water and soap, then to rub them with a dry cloth on a flat board, after which to iron them on the inside with a smoothing iron. Sponging with spirits will also improve old black silks. The ironing may be done on the right side, with thin paper spread over them to prevent glazing.

BED FEATHERS.

Put a manageable quantity into a pillow case or bag, which wash with warm water and soap. Wring out the lather, and rinse them in clean water. Wring them as dry as possible, and hang them up to dry. Shake them frequently while drying. When quite dry, beat them to free them from any dust. They may be now taken from the bag, and are ready for use.

LACE.

When lace has lost its colour, soap it well and put it in cold water, just enough to cover it. If much discoloured, change the water at the end of twenty-four hours. When steeped sufficiently, rinse it out; starch it a little; pick it out as evenly as possible; roll it in a towel, and when nearly dry, iron it. All kinds of lace veils may be treated in a similar manner.

SCARLET CLOTH.

Pour boiling water upon bran, strain it, and, while hot, wash the cloth in it, and rinse with hot water. Soap should

not be used. Purple cloth may be washed in hot water and pure ley. Saxony or dark print dresses should be washed in two lathers, and in the second should be poured a little ox-gall, which will freshen reds, blacks, and greens; and a handful of salt added to the last rinsing-water will prevent the colours running.

CLEAR STARCHING.

Clear starching is practised as follows:—Rinse the articles in three waters, dry them, and dip them in a thick starch, previously strained through muslin; squeeze them, shake them gently, and again hang them up to dry; and when dry, dip them twice or thrice in clear water, squeeze them, spread them on a linen cloth, roll them up in it, and let them lie an hour before ironing them. Some persons put sugar into the starch, to prevent it sticking while ironing, and others stir the starch with a candle to effect the same end; we object to these practices as injurious to the article starched, or as very nauseous. The best plan to prevent sticking is to make the starch well, and to have the irons quite clean and highly polished.

STAINS.

Stains of fruit or wine may be generally removed from linen or cotton cloth by placing the articles over the top of a pail, and pouring boiling water through them till the marks disappear.

INK MARKS OR IRON MOULDS.

Ink marks or iron moulds may be removed by placing a plate (a pewter one is the best) on the top of a basinful of boiling water; then spread the articles on the plate; wet the spot, and rub it with a small quantity of the salts of lemon; as the article dries, the stain will disappear. If this fail, repeat the operation. A small box of salts of lemon will be found very useful in a household.

PAINT OR GREASE SPOTS.

Paint or grease spots may be removed from woollen cloth by turpentine. Smith's scouring drops is a liquid sold in small bottles, which will also be found efficacious in removing oil or grease marks; it is more expensive than turpentine, but has a less offensive odour.

TO EXTRACT GREASE FROM SILK.

As soon after the discovery of the injury as possible, hold the part firmly, and with a clean soft white cloth, or an old

cambric handkerchief, rub the spot briskly, changing the portions of the handkerchief frequently and in a minute or two the spot will disappear. On silks which fray easily, this plan will be unsuitable.

TO REMOVE A TIGHT STOPPER.

It frequently happens that the stopper of a glass bottle or decanter, becomes fixed in its place so firmly, that the exertion of force sufficient to withdraw it would endanger the vessel. In this case, if a cloth be wetted with hot water, and applied to the neck of the bottle, the glass will expand, and the neck will be enlarged, so as to allow the stopper to be easily withdrawn.

ECONOMICAL FUEL.

In places where coal is scarce and dear, a tolerably good fuel may be made by mixing the culm or refuse dross of coal with clay, and moistening the whole with water—masses in the form of bricks or balls may be made, which, when dry, will burn with an intense heat. Where peat prevails, that article may be easily charred by burning in a covered pit or stove; and this charred peat will be found to give a great heat when used in an open fire. The Dutch make much use of their turf in this manner. Another economical fuel, easily procurable where there are woods of Scotch firs, consists of fir cones or tops, which contain a great quantity of solid woody matter in addition to the resinous, and are excellently adapted for domestic fires.

TO LIGHT A FIRE.

To light a fire, clear the ashes from the grate, leaving a few cinders for a foundation, upon which put a piece of dry crumpled brown paper, and lay on a few small sticks crosswise, then some of larger size, and on them a few pieces of coal, and next the large cinders; and when the flames have caught the coal, add a backing of small coal and cinders. When the fire has become low, stir it together, but do not turn the large cinders; clear the front of the lower bar to admit air, and pass the poker into the bottom of the fire, to clear it of ashes; and then with tongs put on a few large pieces of coal towards the front of the fire, but not on the upper, else the fire will smoke. Coals should not be thrown on, but put on gently with a scoop or shovel; and even the smallest ashes may be burnt at the back of the fire, if they be covered with small coal. The best and quickest mode of restoring a neglected fire is to stir out the ashes, and with the tongs to fill up the spaces between the bars with cinders. If

carefully done, it is surprising how soon this process will produce a glowing fire.

Ashes and small cinders mixed with water into a mass, and put on the back of a fire with a few coals, burn well, so that ashes may thus be entirely burnt up. In stoves under boilers, this mixture is very useful, as it lasts long, with little addition.

SMOKY CHIMNEYS.

The cause of smokiness in chimneys are various; but all are connected with the properties of air and heat, for the smoke is only particles of culm ascending through the agency of heated air. To make a chimney vent well, the column of heated air from the fire must not be entangled with cold air from beneath nor retarded by cold air coming down the chimney. To effect these objects, the fire-place must not be much larger than the grate, and the chimney must be of a certain length and bent. The great leading cause of smokiness is cold air somehow or other mixing with the warm air about the mouth or throat of the chimney, and so causing a sluggishness in the ascent, or no ascent at all. Therefore, the nearer the air is made to pass the fire on all sides, the more rarefied it will be; and the less vacancy there is in the chimney-place, it will ascend with the greater rapidity. A proper contraction of the mouth of the chimney, at the same time allowing the fire to be fed freely with air, will be found in most instances to cure smoke. Of late, certain contrivances called dampers, by which the chimney throat can be narrowed, have been the means of effecting draughts, and so curing smoke. It should be noted, that in contracting chimney-throats, the contraction should not be all at once, but at first gradual, and then straight upward, so as not to allow a volume of cold air to lurk in a hollow above. A chimney being wide at bottom, and gradually narrowing towards the next storey, allows the coldish air to hang about the lower parts, by which, when a gust of wind comes, the smoke is driven back into the room. This kind of smokiness is the most teasing of all the forms of chimney diseases. Every little puff of wind sends a smaller or larger quantity of smoke into the apartment, and often when it is least expected. Perhaps this kind of smokiness is not in all cases caused by wrong construction, but arises from the situation of the house; and of this we shall immediately say a few words.

If a funnel of a chimney be made too narrow to afford an easy passage to the top, the smoke will then naturally be forced into the room to find some other passage; this defect

is very common, and the remedy troublesome and difficult. The most effectual cure, if the situation will admit, is to build a small additional flue, and open a hole into it from the back of the chimney, near the level of the mantel-piece, slanting upwards in an easy direction; this supplemental flue must be carried to the top of the building to receive the surplus of the smoke, and will prove a certain cure. If the situation will not allow of this expedient, the fire-place may be contracted both in breadth and height, a smaller grate used, and the chimney heightened at the top; which will oblige the air to pass close over the fire, and carry up the smoke with greater rapidity, for the quicker the current, the less room it requires. Should the chimney still smoke, a blower, or front plate, to put on and take off at pleasure, will be of use. But if none of these prescriptions answer, then something must be done to improve the current of air towards the fire. This brings us to a consideration of the want of ventilation in the room.

If the chimney and fire-place be faultless, and yet smoke, it is almost certain that there is a want of ventilation. In ordinary circumstances, as much air is admitted by chinks in windows and doors as will feed a fire; but if the room be rendered very close by closing as many chinks as possible, how is the fire to receive air? According to the plan on which houses are generally built, ventilation is left to be a matter of chance. To ventilate an old house is therefore no easy task. The following plans are worth considering, for they have been found to answer:—Contrive to bring a small tube from the external air, or from a staircase or lobby, to a point beneath the grate, so as to cause a free current of air to reach the fire. If the mouth of the tube below the grate be topped with a cowl, the ashes will be prevented from falling into it. Some years ago, the rooms of a public office in Edinburgh were completely cured of smoke by this simple contrivance, after all other means had failed. Another plan consists in perforating small holes in the cornice or roof, for the air to gain admission; but, unfortunately, unless care be taken to prevent colds, the cure is apt to be worse than the disease.

Cases are by no means uncommon of fire-places giving out a puff of smoke every time the door of the room is shut. The cause of this kind of smokiness is the want of ventilation in the room. In shutting the door, it pulls out a certain quantity of air, which cannot be afforded to be lost, or it causes such distraction of the current towards the fire, that the equilibrium that carries up the smoke is destroyed, and a puff downwards—in other words, a rush of air loaded with smoke

from the chimney—is the consequence. It will be remarked, that this smokiness occurs most frequently when the door is on the same side of the room as the fire-place. We should therefore advise house-planners to avoid this bad arrangement. If possible, let the door be on a different side from that in which the fire is placed. Most houses in which the chimneys go up the middle walls instead of the gables, have the fault we mention. A remedy for this smokiness is to contract the mouth of the chimney, and, if possible, heighten the stalk; for if the chimney be pretty long, the heated air ascending it goes with such a force that the outer heavy air cannot get down, at least not to so great an extent as to cause a puff when the door is shutting. In some cases, the cause of the disease will be found to be air rushing up behind the grate, if a register, and then coming down to supply the fire, the action of the door disturbing the current. This is therefore an argument for always taking care to build register stoves quite close behind, not leaving the smallest crevice for air to steal up the chimney without first going through the fire.

In erecting chimneys, it should be a rule to carry them up a good way in a perpendicular direction, before making a turn, by which means the heated air gains a force in its primary vertical ascent, which carries it over future difficulties. In walls in which the fire-place of one storey is immediately below the fire-place above, it is impossible to get a perfect straight for any great length; therefore this must be left to the judgment of the builder. It is also advantageous for all chimneys to have a bend in them before reaching the top, and a garret chimney should have two bends. For want of attention to this top bending, many cottage and small villa chimneys smoke. The use of bends is obvious. Strong, sudden, and accidental gusts of wind sometimes enter, and beat into the top of the chimney; a turning or bend, therefore, will break the force of the wind, and prevent it repelling the heated air downwards. But if the chimney is straight, and the gust meet with no interruption, it will stop the passage of the smoke for a while, and of course force what rises from the fire immediately into the chamber. It is to be observed that the farther the wind gets down the funnel the greater strength will be required to repel it; therefore the nearer to the top the bend or winding is, the better. Also, if there is a storm of wind, with heavy showers of hail, snow, or rain, falling perpendicularly in great drops, the first bend or turning will, in part, stop their progress; but if the funnel is perpendicular all the way down, the great drops of hail, snow, and rain, will fall freely to the bottom, repelling the smoke into the room; and if the funnel is

foul, great quantities of soot will be driven down. These reasons recommend a bend in some part of the funnel as absolutely necessary.

Garret chimneys are more liable to smoke than any other in the house, owing to the shortness of the funnel: for when the composition of rarified air and smoke has made its way up a high funnel, it forms a strong column, and to repel it requires a proportionably great force; but in a garret chimney this strong column cannot be obtained; therefore, what cannot be had from nature must be aimed at by art. The fault in most garret chimneys is being carried up in a straight direction from bottom to top in a slovenly manner, and with funnels as large as any in the house; whereby the little internal rarefied air has the whole immediate pressure of the atmosphere to resist, which, in general, is too powerful for it. But a garret or cottage chimney carried up and executed in a proper manner, with due proportion in every part, according to the size of the room, and the funnel in an easy crooked direction, will draw and be as clear from smoke as any other.

TO PURIFY WATER.

To purify water, put into a hogshead of it a large table-spoonful of powdered alum, stir it, and in a few hours the impurities will be sent to the bottom. A pailful of four gallons may be purified by a single tea-spoonful of alum. Freshly-burnt charcoal is also an excellent sweetener of water.

TO FILTER WATER.

Put into an earthen vessel (such as sugar-bakers use to form the loaves in, with a small hole at the bottom or pointed end) some pieces of sponge; and on them a sufficient number of small clean pebbles to quarter-fill the vessel. Hang this filter end downward, in a barrel with the head out, leaving a space of about two or three inches between the end of the filter and the bottom of the barrel. The upper part of the filter should be kept a little above the top of the barrel, which must always be kept full of water. The sediment of the water will remain at the bottom of the barrel, and the pure water will rise through the sponge and pebbles to the vacant part of the filter. It may be hung in a cistern, or water-butt if more convenient. The pebbles and sponge should be cleansed occasionally.

Another economical filter may be made by taking out the head of a cask, setting it upright, and at a distance of about one-third from the bottom putting in a shelf or partition pierced with small holes; this shelf being covered with

pebbles, upon which is a layer of fresh charcoal made from bones; and over this lay fine sand, to the depth of an inch, covered with another layer of pebbles; and upon this should be placed another shelf, pierced with holes, to prevent the pebbles, sand, and charcoal being disturbed by the water which is poured or runs in at the top of the cask; and after passing through the filter, is drawn off by a crane placed at the bottom of the cask.

VERMIN.

The best plan for preventing the attacks of vermin in houses is to keep the house scrupulously clean; for where there is cleanliness and ordinary precautions, no vermin will generate or exist.

RATS AND MICE.

These might in some instances be completely prevented from encroaching in dwellings by giving a solid foundation to the house, cutting off the approach by grating the drains, but especially by filling up all open spaces beneath pavements and in walls and partitions. Mice might be effectually kept out by only filling up the spaces behind skirting boards in rooms. These vacant spaces are invariably the habitations of mice, and the first thing any person should do in entering into possession of a domicile, is to cause all the spaces behind the skirting-boards and wainscoats to be filled with plaster. Where mice and rats have gained a footing in a house, they should be taken off by a cat or trap, and when one kind of trap fails, another may be tried. All schemes for poisoning them with arsenic or other ingredients are dangerous, and cannot be recommended.

BUGS.

These pests exist only in dirty houses. A careful housewife or servant will soon completely destroy them. The surest method of destruction is to catch them individually when they attack the person in bed. When their bite is felt, instantly rise and light a candle and capture them. This may be troublesome, but if there be not a great number, a few nights will finish them. When there is a large number, and they have gained a lodgment in the timbers, take the bed in pieces, and fill in all the apertures and joints with a mixture of soft soap and Scotch snuff. A piece of wicker-work, called a bug-

trap, placed at the head of the bed, forms a receptacle for them, and then they may be daily caught till no more are left. Fumigations are very dangerous, and rarely effectual, therefore attempt no such project. Oil-painting a wall is a means of excluding and destroying them.

FLEAS.

There is no way of ridding a bed or house of these vermin but excessive cleanliness. Keep the floors well swept and washed, and if you have a dog, comb and wash it frequently. Fleas are bred on the ground, or among dust.

LICE.

Lice are now almost unknown in England. Wherever they are found, there certainly also is found dirtiness. Ignorant people imagine that these nauseous vermin breed spontaneously; this is a gross error. By cleanliness they are completely prevented; and the more warm the climate, so is the necessity for cleanliness greater.

BEETLES, COCKROACHES, AND CRICKETS.

These may be caught in traps. A simple trap for them is a glazed basin or pie-dish half-filled with sweetened beer or milk, and to the edge of which a piece of wood is laid from the floor as a gangway. Do not attempt poisoning or fumigation.

FLIES.

It is difficult to rid a house of flies by any other plan than by poisoning, and that is too dangerous to be recommended. A composition of milk, sugar, and pepper, will attract and kill them, and so will a decoction of quasia; but both cause them to make offensive marks on the walls and furniture before they die. Gilt frames and chandeliers should be shrouded in thin yellow gauze or paper, in situations where the flies are likely to spoil them. Trecs about a house form a harbour for flies, as well as dirt of all kinds. Cleanliness and airiness are the best preventives.

MOTHS.

The best way to preserve furs or worsteds from moths is to sew them closely up in a bag of new unwashed linen; if this is not done, the next best is to take the articles frequently out and brush and air them. The odour of camphor, shavings of Russia leather, lavender, &c., are much less efficacious than they are supposed to be. Kill every flying moth which you see.

SLUGS.

Take a quantity of cabbage leaves, and either put them into a warm oven, or hold them before a fire till they are quite soft; then rub them with unsalted butter, or any kind of fresh dripping, and lay them in the places infested with slugs. In a few hours the leaves will be found covered with snails and slugs, which may then be destroyed in any way you think fit.

DOMESTIC MANUFACTURES.

The attempt to make all sorts of articles for domestic use is now far from economical, as the time and expence bestowed upon them are often of greater amount than what would buy the things ready from shops. We therefore confine our directions to articles which may require to be manufactured in families at a great distance from towns, or for the families of emigrants in remote settlements.

BLACKING FOR SHOES.

There are many ways of making this article, the chief ingredients employed being ivory black, vinegar or sour beer, sugar, a little sweet oil, and oil of vitriol. A good blacking may be made as follows:—Mix three ounces of ivory-black, two ounces of treacle, a table-spoonful of sweet oil, one ounce of vitriol, one ounce of gum-arabic dissolved in water, and a pint of vinegar.

BLACKING-BALLS.

For blacking-balls mix one pound of ivory-black, one pound of lamp-black, a quarter of a pound of gum-arabic dissolved in water, six ounces of brown sugar, half an ounce of melted glue, and a quart of water; and make into balls. A fine blacking for dress-shoes may be made by well beating two eggs, and adding a table-spoonful of spirits of wine, a lump of sugar, and ivory-black to thicken. This blacking may also be used for restoring the black leather seats and backs of chairs, &c. It should be laid on and polished as other blacking, and then left a day to harden.

BLACKING FOR HARNESS.

Melt two ounces of mutton suet with six ounces of bees'-wax; add six ounces of sugar-candy, and two ounces of soft soap dissolved in water, and one ounce of indigo finely pow-

dered; and when melted and well mixed, add a gill of turpentine. Lay it on the harness with a sponge, and polish off with a brush.

CEMENT.

Various preparations are used for mending broken china, earthenware, and glass. The most successful are as follows:—Beat the white of an egg with quicklime, in impalpable powder, into a paste; to which is sometimes added a little whey, made by mixing vinegar and milk. A little isinglass, dissolved in mastie varnish, is another cement. Nature supplies some cements ready to our hands—as the juice of garlic, and the white slime of large snails; and it has been stated in a respectable scientific journal, that a broken flint has been joined so effectually with this snail cement, that when dashed upon a stone pavement, the flint broke elsewhere than at the cemented parts. In their anxiety to unite broken articles, persons generally defeat themselves by spreading the cement too thickly upon the edges of the article, whereas the least possible quantity should be used, so as to bring the edges almost close together; and this may be aided by heating the fragments to be joined.

PASTE.

Paste is useful in a house for preparing walls, cupboards, boxes, labelling, &c. Dr. M'Culloch, of Edinburgh, employs "paste made of flour in the usual way, but rather thick, with a proportion of brown sugar, and a small quantity of corrosive sublimate. The use of the sugar is to keep it flexible, so as to prevent it scaling off from smooth surfaces; and that of the corrosive sublimate—independent of preserving it from insects—is an effectual check against its fermentation. This salt does not, however, prevent the formation of mouldiness; but a drop or two of oil of lavender, peppermint, or anise-seed, is a complete security against this.

WATERPROOF STUFF FOR SHOES.

In winter, or during wet weather, shoes may be rendered durable by applying to the soles and seams a composition made of the following materials:—Half a pint of boiled linseed oil, two table-spoonfuls of turpentine, one ounce of bees'-wax, and a quarter of an ounce of Burgundy pitch. Melt the whole together, and apply with a brush before the fire. Repeat the application till the soles will absorb no more. Neats'-foot oil, alone, will be found an excellent preservation of shoes in wet weather.

INK.

An excellent ink suitable for writing with steel pens, which it does not corrode, may be made of the following articles:—Sixty grains of caustic soda, a pint of water, and as much Indian ink as you think fit for making a proper blackness.

BOTTLE WAX.

A good kind of bottle wax or cement may be cheaply made as follows:—Put into an iron ladle half a pound of rosin, two ounces of bees'-wax, and when melted over the fire, stir in Venetian red, lamp-black, or other colouring; and apply while hot. If kept for after use, melt with a candle as usual when applied.

POTATO-STARCH.

Wash and peel a gallon of good potatoes, grate them into a pail of water, stir frequently, and then let them settle. On the following day the starch will be found at the bottom of the pail; when pour off the water, add fresh, stir as before, and let it subside a second time; when pour off the water, and dry the sediment in the sun or a slow oven. An excellent starch may also be made by setting in a cool place the water in which rice has been boiled (though not in a cloth,) which will in twenty-four hours become a strong starch.

POTASHES.

Settlers in the backwoods of America, or other woody regions, have an opportunity of manufacturing potash, an article of great use and considerable value. A vast quantity of this substance is annually made in Canada, and exported to Great Britain. Potashes are made from the ashes of burnt trees. In burning timber to clear the land, the ashes are carefully preserved, and put in barrels, or other vessels with holes in the bottom; and water being poured over them, a liquid or alkali is run off; this ley being boiled in large boilers, the watery particles evaporate, and leave what is called black salts, a sort of residuum, which, when heated to a high degree, becomes fused, and finally, when cool, assumes the character of potash.

By these potashes the Canadians make their own soap; the ley of a barrel of ashes, boiled along with ten pounds of tallow, till it is of a proper consistence, produces about forty pounds of very good soft soap. It is related, that when the land has been covered with heavy timber of a hard nature, there is such a quantity of ashes produced that their value will pay for clearing the land.