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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Tuesday, March 22, 1932.

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(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Cleaning Windows and Shades." Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: "Housecleaning Made Easier."

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Uncle Silas puffed on his after-breakfast pipe and gazed out the east window in a state, he declared, of perfect contentment.

"This spring weather is so cheering on the spirits," said he. "And doesn't that sunshine look mighty pretty coming in through the window? It puts me in mind of daffodils and tulips and singing birds and--"

"And window cleaning," added Cousin Susan briskly. "There's nothing like bright sunshine to show up the dirty spots on the window. My, my, look at the streak there and a finger print here and--"

"I'm terribly afraid, Susan," sighed Uncle Silas, "That you haven't much true poetry in your nature."

"Poetry, Silas. Rubbish. Poetry won't keep the windows clean."

Uncle Silas took a large puff on his pipe and made no reply.

"But," continued Cousin Susan, "I'll tell you one thing that keeps these windows dirty -- the smoke from that old pipe of yours."

"Tut, tut," Uncle Ebenezer put in. "I've heard say that this kind of conversation leads to hard feelings. You wouldn't deprive Silas of such solace as a pipe, would you, Susan? If one of you excellent housekeepers will give me some scientific directions, I'll volunteer to go to work on those windows today and then we can all enjoy the sunshine through them."

There's a scientific way of doing most housekeeping jobs, even such good old spring time chores as washing windows. There are easy ways and hard ways to make windows clean and shining. There are also inefficient and efficient ways.

For most windows there's probably nothing better than clear warm water with a few drops of ammonia or denatured alcohol added. Alcohol helps especially if there's a film of grease on the glass as there frequently is on kitchen windows.

What to apply the washing water with? Several things will do the job well. Chamois, for example. The big point in favor of this material is that

there's no lint in it to come off on the glass. It's a good idea to have two pieces of chamois--one for washing and one for drying. Strange to say, the piece for drying must be damp also, for chamois hardens when it's dry and only becomes soft again when you moisten it. If you don't use chamois, choose some soft, lintless cloth. But avoid torn-off pieces because they fray off and leave threads and lint on the pane. I remember making a brave attempt, once upon a time, to polish some windows with some soft old pieces of linen. It took me most of the day to finish one window. Every time I went over the pane with the cloth, I covered the glass anew with lint. One more point. Except when you are washing very small panes of glass, use a large enough piece of cloth or chamois to make a good, generous handful. YOU'LL find this size most convenient and time saving.

Did you ever notice professional window cleaners at work on the show windows of stores? Many housewives would profit by stopping a minute in their shopping to watch them. Did you ever notice the strip of rubber they use for wiping down the moisture? That's called a "squeegee" a cute little name that just suits this tool, I think. It's a simple and very handy device, saves both time and strength, and, fortunately, it's now made in small sizes for household use. But there's a trick about using it. You have to hold it very firmly against the pane and draw it down with an even stroke. At the end of each stroke, wipe the squeegee off with a cloth held in the left hand, so it will be clean for the next space.

One of these squeegees and a sponge make a very handy pair for producing spotless, shining windows. You can use the sponge, you see, both for washing the pane and for wiping the moisture from the squeegee. And at the end of the cleaning all you have to do is to squeeze out the sponge and the job is done. No cloths to wipe off and dry afterward.

Some people like to clean windows with fine friction pastes or powders that are put on moist and then wiped off dry. The disadvantage of these materials is that they are likely to make a white dust in the room.

That's the end of my story about window cleaning. If you know any better way of doing it, please write me before Uncle Ebenezer gets started on the upstairs windows.

But here's a postscript to that story. It's about window shades. Even when the window itself is clear and shining, its immaculate appearance can be spoiled by dirty shades or dirty curtains. Brushing your window shades frequently will help keep them clean. And any soiled spots can often be removed with art gum or one of the commercial wall-paper cleaners. If you have washable shades in your windows, you are fortunate. They are the easiest to clean. They keep their appearance and last well even in the kitchen or bathroom where they get treated to a lot of moisture. And they aren't harmed if you happen to leave the window open when a shower comes up and drives some rain in onto them.

Here's the proper way to wash these washable shades. Lay the shade flat on the table. Use a small brush and mild soapsuds. Scrub with a circular motion--round and round. Then wipe off the suds with a cloth or sponge wrung out of clear water. Allow the shade to dry before you roll and rehang it.

What's that, Arabella? Another suggestion about cleaning windows? Yes, dusting windows frequently certainly does help keep them clean and means that you don't have to wash them so often. That blue haze that so often appears on window panes can often just be rubbed off by a soft dry cloth or a slightly moist chamois.

Before time is up today I must tell you about the nice letter I've just had from a lady up in Portland, Maine, about the cookbook. Here's the letter. I'll read you her very words.

She says: "I just want to write a note to thank you for the green cookbook you sent me. I'm having a splendid time trying out the different things. The vanilla wafers are wonderful. Mine came out as crisp as could be. But I only had three of that first batch because my husband ate the rest of the two whole bake tins full. Now my sister wants a cookbook. She has asked me to copy off so many recipes for her that I think she needs one of her own?"

Wasn't that a pleasant letter to receive first thing on a spring morning?

And that's the third housekeeper in these last few days to write me about those vanilla wafers.

For those who don't yet own a cookbook, I'm going to wind up the program today with that very popular recipe. Eight ingredients for vanilla wafers.

2/3 cup of butter	1 and 1/4 cups of sifted flour
1/2 cup of sugar	1 teaspoon of baking powder
1 egg	1/4 teaspoon of salt, and
2 tablespoons of milk	2 teaspoons of vanilla

I'll go over that list once more while you check. (Repeat.)

First thing, cream the butter and sugar. Then add the well-beaten egg, the milk, and the sifted dry ingredients. Last the vanilla. Drop by one-half teaspoons on a lightly greased baking sheet, allowing room to spread. Bake in a moderate oven (about 350 degrees F.) for about 10 minutes, or until the edges are golden brown.

Tomorrow - A Simple One-Course Luncheon featuring Cream Soup.

