THE SEASON WHEN EVERYBODY LIVES OUT OF DOORS

Outdoor Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, Sleeping Rooms, Have Almost Replaced the Old-Fashioned Piazza

By ELENE FOSTER

"EXTERIOR decorating is becoming our specialty," said Letitia, glancing up from the letter which she was reading. "This time it's a porch or outdoor living room. Do you realize how many people live practically out-of-doors for at least six months of the year? The outdoor living room and the sleeping porch are becoming the first consideration of the suburban householder.

"In fact, from the first spring days until the snow flies in the late autumn the inside of the suburban house is used merely as a passageway between the living porch and the sleeping porch. The family breakfasts on the porch, lunches and teas on the porch, receives its guests on the porch, dines on the porch and when bedtime comes merely moves on upstairs to another porch on which to spend the night. Even the kitchen is forsaken for a 'summer kitchen' on the rear porch."

"It must be a great saving in the wear and tear of the furniture in the inside of the house," I remarked. "It's like having two houses in one. I should think it would have many advantages. For one thing, one doesn't get so mortal tired of seeing the same old tables and chairs, year in and year out, if one only has to endure them for six months at a time."

"The evolution of the outdoor living room from the old-fashioned veranda, or 'piazza,' as it used to be called, is interesting," Letitia went on. "You remember the piazza in our young days?"

"I wish to goodness, Letitia," I remonstrated, "that you wouldn't always talk as if we belonged to the Early Victorian era."

THE OLD-FASHIONED PIAZZA

"Don't be so touchy," she replied. "This wasn't over twenty years ago, and you can't gainsay the fact that you sat, at the age of five, if you like, on the edge of a hemp hammock swung across the corner of a New England piazza and made wreaths from the leaves of the woodbine which grew around its posts.

"And you must remember (even from the age of five) the piazza chairs in the natural wood color, varnished—rocking chairs for the most part—in which one travelled as one rocked over the entire area of the piazza. The advent of the 'piazza chair man' with his long wagon piled with the yellow chairs, was one of the first signs of spring. These piazza chairs and the hammock made up the entire furnishings of the 'piazza.'

"The old-time piazza, too, was never closed in. It had a railing around it with wooden posts at intervals, and it was built straight out in the front of the house in the face and eyes of everybody. There was no seclusion, no privacy. This probably accounted for the fact that it was rarely used in the daytime, except by the children of the family; only in the evening did the grown-ups enjoy its cool drafts.

"But all that is changed. The 'piazza' has become a 'porch,' and it no longer protrudes like an appendage on the front of the house; it is incorporated in the house itself. It is usually so arranged that it can be closed in with window sashes in the winter and with netting in the summer. It is furnished like a room, albeit in a simple, summery way; no upholstered furniture, but wicker or painted wooden pieces, and it is used as the general living room of the house. It often contains a chimney with a big open fireplace which can be used on chilly evenings or when the air is damp with rain.

SOME PICTURESQUE PORCHES

"The porches are constructed in different ways. The most common has a low wall of the material of which the house is built, shingles or plaster or brick, as the case may be, with wide uprights of the same material at intervals forming long-shaped openings into which sashes or wire screens may be fitted.

"Another idea is a series of long French windows with panels at the bottom and window sashes at the top. When closed these have the appearance of a panelled wall with a series of casement windows, and when open the porch becomes an open veranda.

"If one has an old-fashioned open 'piazza' this can be screened from public view by a row of boxes filled with vines and plants along the top of the rail. This reminds me that I stumbled, when I least expected it, upon a charming little veranda right here in New York.

"I was looking for an apartment which a girl from Des Moines could sublet for the summer, and I stumbled on Mr. and Mrs. Newlywed having breakfast on their rear porch. They had remodelled the floor of an old house and converted the old wooden porch on the rear into a charming breakfast room.

"It was covered with a green and white striped awning and screened at the end with a plain green shade. There was a row of wooden boxes filled with thick foliage on the top of the piazza rail and on both of the window sills, and in the corner was the dainty breakfast table set for two, as cool and comfy and cosey as you please. And when the little bride came forth, all in pale pink with an adorable little Dutch cap, the picture was complete.

"The main thing to consider in furnishing a porch," continued Letitia, "to my mind, is to make it consistent with the rest of the house. For instance, an Italian house should have a porch with a stone floor and stone furniture, and be more or less formal in character. It needn't be bare or cold in feeling, however; in fact, it can be exceedingly attractive and still be in keeping.

"I know such a porch which has, besides the stone pieces, plain willow chairs and a willow table, and which is dressed up with wrought iron stands and vases and wall pockets filled with ivy, giving it a really festive appearance.

"And now," said Letitia, "I have finished my lecture, and we will go on a pilgrimage in search of the perfect porch."

After a short train ride we alighted at a little station which bore the familiar legend "Blaine's Point." I looked at Letitia. Her face wore a knowing smile.

"You are right," she said. "I am taking you to Pamela's peasant cottage again. She has added a porch on the rear of the house and furnished it in keeping with the interior."

Pamela met us at the door.

"You two are much improved in looks," she said, "since you have been working out of doors. There is nothing like fresh air to blow away the wrinkles."

Letitia laughed. "Be careful," she warned. "You are treading on dangerous ground. We object to the 'wrinkles.' They place us in the Early Victorian era!"

PORCH OF THE PEASANT COTTAGE

Pamela paid no attention to this remark, but led the way to a door which had been cut in the wall on the further side of the living room, and which opened on the closed-in porch. This porch had a floor of concrete marked off in squares and varnished and rubbed down like that in the living room. This was partly covered with a porch rug made of twelve-inch squares of rush with a tiny border of black.

The walls were of plaster in the natural cement color and the woodwork was stained like black oak. A cement wall three feet high went around the three open sides of the porch, and above this was a series of long openings, in which casement windows were fitted. These windows were hung with straight, full curtains of green and white striped linen, and the sashes were outlined like those inside the house with a line of orange vermilion. Later these casement windows would be removed and replaced by wire screens, for Blaine's Point is in the heart of the mosquito belt.

The furniture was of the same peasant order as that inside the house and painted the same green color, but without the stencilling. The only decoration was a line of white here and there. There was a settee and comfortable armchairs, like those in the living room, and a folding gate-legged table large enough to serve a breakfast for four people.

In one corner was a wrought iron stand holding a huge glass bowl of goldfish, and there were baskets hanging from the ceiling, filled with Wandering Jew and Creeping Charlie. Wooden wall brackets, painted orange and shaped like half an urn with a green trellis above, were filled with hanging vines.

There were numerous accessories in the shape of pillows of green and white striped linen, a tall green and white wooden standard with a crook at the top, from which hung a green birdcage inhabited by an orange and green parrot.

"Even the bird ties in with the color scheme," said Letitia.

"If you think that," answered Pamela, "you should hear his language! It makes the vermilion sashes look pale by contrast."

At Pamela's suggestion we called for a moment on a neighbor who had a porch furnished in quite a different character. Here was a series of long French doors in groups of three, each group being treated like a window and hung with two sets of curtains, one of cream muslin near the glass and over-draperies of gay chintz made with a short, full valance across the top.

The furniture was of reed, in what is known as the Swiss type, painted a soft yellow. There were hanging baskets of carved wood, painted in the same shade and filled with English ivy, and in front of the middle window stood a long, narrow yellow box on a yellow wicker stand filled with a mass of green foliage.

There was a big brick chimney on the house wall with a wide fireplace. The floor was of brick, with braided rugs of rush in the natural color. At one end stood a round breakfast table of the same Swiss reed, with four reed chairs.

Here breakfast is served all the year round; in the winter with the French windows closed and the open fire blazing (to say nothing of a steam radiator which is added for winter service) it makes a cheerful morning room, and in summer, with the windows thrown wide open, it is a charming veranda.

"And now we go on further down the island to say 'How do you do?' to another old friend," said Letitia. "My letter this morning was from Helen Poore, asking advice about her porch, with which you will remember we did very little at the time that we did the house and garden."

When we were in the train she read an extract from Mrs. Poore's letter.

"We adore our house, Letitia dear," she wrote, "and we have quite lost our taste for caviar since we have become acquainted with your particular brand of good red herring. There is one more herring needed, however. Will you supply it? We find that we have money enough to do up the porch, my workroom you know, in the way that it should be done, so won't you please come and help us out? You remember we paid little attention to it when we did the house, but now that warm weather has come we use it more than any other room in the house."

THE PORCH OF THE LITTLE HOUSE

Mrs. Poore met us with open arms and led the way to the porch. It had a brick floor and the walls were in the natural cement color. A series of French windows, separated by little spaces of cement, extended around three sides of the room. These windows had wooden panels three feet high with casement windows over them.

Letitia studied it all carefully for a few minutes and then her edict went forth.

"In the first place this room must grow naturally out of the living room and be a part of the house. So we will curtain the windows with the same material that we used inside the house—cream pongee, but without trimming.

"For furniture we must have first of all a long, narrow table on which Mrs. Poore can work, a rush-seated settee and plenty of comfortable chairs all in a simple design, not so heavy as those which Pamela used, but of a lighter, more graceful nature. And painted in—'aye, there's the rub'!—let's see, inside there is mauve, French green and cream. This *must* tie in with that. How would you like a nice soft gray lined off with cream?"

"Sounds cool and re-fined," said Mrs. Poore.

And so we settled on gray, not a battleship gray, but a pinkish, soft gray (does any one realize, I wonder, how absolutely impossible it is to describe a color?) and a bit of deep cream color introduced sparingly here and there.

"Braided rush rugs in the natural color, with speckles of black in the border, were to be laid on the brick floor. There were to be pillows of gray and white linen, with one or two of the plum color used inside the house and, on every possible spot on the walls, brackets and baskets filled with green foliage.

"A long gray flower-box on legs would stand between two of the windows, filled with ivy which would climb over the green trellis above it. With the door wide open to the orchard, the gray and cream of the furniture would blend on the one side with the green of the leaves and on the other with the plum color and green of the living room.

INTERESTING PORCH FURNITURE

"There are so many charming articles for porch use," said Letitia, as we wended our way to the railroad station. "Take the furniture, every season brings new and interesting varieties. This year it seems to be nip and tuck between the wooden painted peasant furniture and the plain Swiss reed. The Herter Looms carry a unique type of porch furniture which they import from the Philippines, black and white rush or grass in interesting shapes.

"It seems strange that one rarely sees a hammock nowadays, when back in our young days they were the one necessity for a porch. They belong to the period of the eighties. The sweet young heroine of the Duchess's novels was always discovered by the handsome hero reclining in a hammock and reading Tennyson. But the sweet young thing of these modern days is not the lolling kind; she much prefers the straight-backed chair and a volume of Wells.

"As the porch is almost universally used as a breakfast room, it is quite important that there should be an electric outlet conveniently arranged to attach the coffee percolator, the toaster or the tea kettle. There are all sorts of interesting dishes and glassware for the porch table, and, of course, a service or tea wagon is a necessity for serving. These are made in painted wood or wicker to match the rest of the furniture.

"There is an infinite variety of wall brackets, of wrought iron, carved wood and of pottery or stone. The Chinese pottery wall pocket, with its soft colorings in ware resembling majolica, makes a lovely bit of color on a cement wall. There are also charming wall brackets which come from Spain, blue and cream on the Moorish order, or green and blue and yellow from the gypsy pottery of old Seville.

"A 'tiffin table,' which comes straight from Hong Kong, and consists of a folding stand on which two straw trays are set, is a most convenient stand for breakfast or tea. It is these little accessories, touches of color, that make the porch individual and 'different.'"

"I like the sound of 'tiffin,'" I remarked at this stage. "Sounds like toasted muffins and tea."

Letitia groaned. "One thing is certain," said she. "No one will ever accuse you of having an 'early Victorian' appetite."

WHERE TO FIND FURNISHINGS

AT THIS season of the year porch furnishings are everywhere. But if you want the unusual thing that just fits into the style and color scheme of your house, it might be well to look carefully in the shops named below, for from these places came the furnishings mentioned in Miss Foster's article.

The Swiss reed furniture, the painted wooden furniture, the hanging baskets and iron flower stands came from Mrs. A. Van R. Barnewall, 19 East Forty-eighth Street, a place where you can always find the exclusive thing that no one else seems to have.

The stone furniture, vases and wall fountains came from William F. Jackson & Co., 2 West Forty-seventh Street.

The Philippine furniture was found at the Herter Looms, 841 Madison Avenue; the plain willow furniture and tiffin tables at Lord & Taylor's, Fifth Avenue and Thirty-eighth Street.

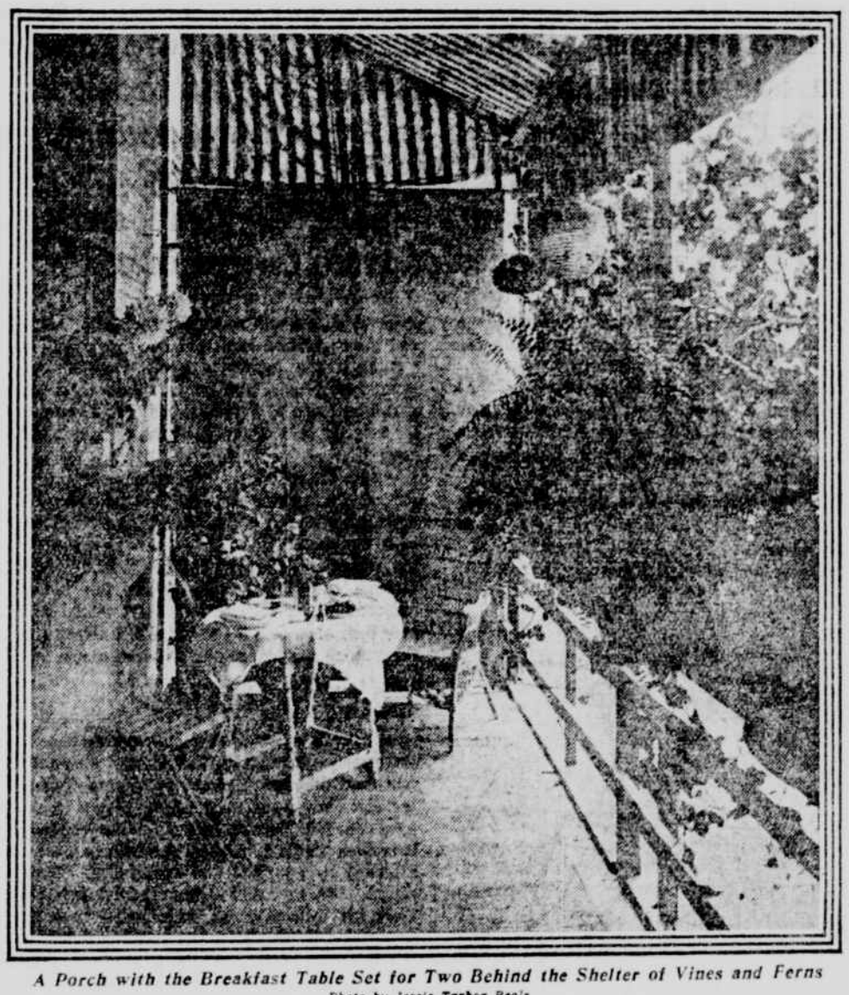
Porch rugs in the widest variety can be found at the house of W. & J. Sloane & Co., Fifth Avenue and Forty-seventh Street.

As to draperies, the green and white striped linen, which in the case of one of these porches tied the color scheme so perfectly to the surroundings both inside and outside the house, was obtained at Miss Swift's, 11 East Fifty-fifth Street, where one can find not only rare furniture and unusual bric-a-brac, but practically everything in the way of beautiful and distinctive fabrics and draperies. The chintz used for the other porch was furnished by Miss Newell and Miss Dudley, 3 West Fifty-sixth Street.

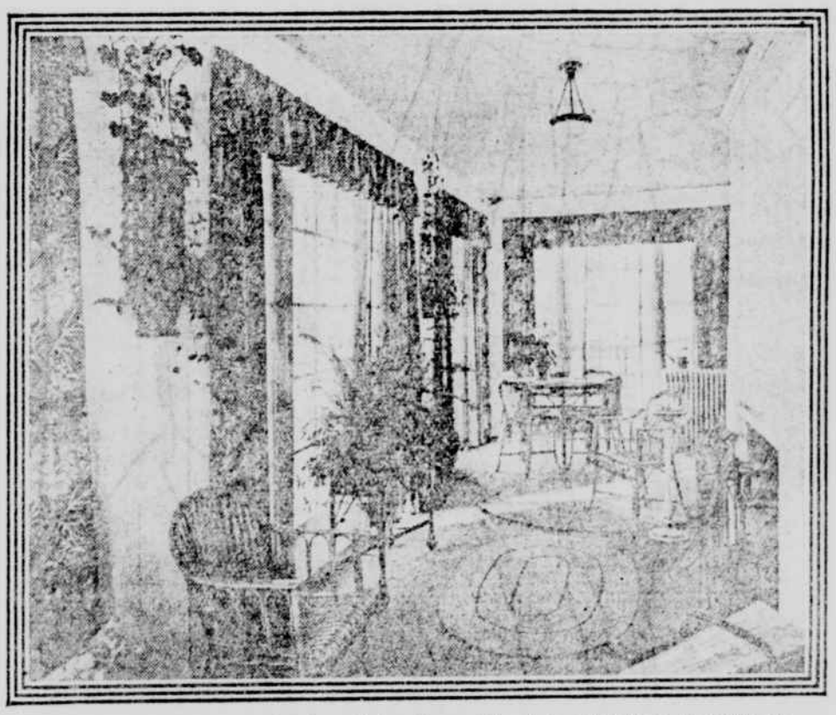
The peasant furniture came from Chamberlin Dodds, 28 East Fifty-second Street, and this house also furnished the iron stands, painted wall brackets, birdcages, etc.

The china wall pockets of quaint design and exotic coloring came from their logical home, the shop of Soi Kee & Co., Mott Street. The Spanish wall brackets were furnished by the John Chadwick Company, 15 East Fifty-seventh Street, and the china and glass suitable for setting the table for outdoor meals was obtained from C. J. Dierck, 34 West Thirty-sixth Street.

The Tribune Institute
In the World of Women



A Porch with the Breakfast Table Set for Two Behind the Shelter of Vines and Ferns
Photo by Jessie Tarbox Beals



A Porch Made Into an Outdoor Living Room, Closed In with Glass in Chilly or Stormy Weather
Photo by Permission of Mrs. A. Van R. Barnewall

The Porch Is Now a Link Between the Interior of the House and the Garden That Surrounds It

The Housekeeper's Bookshelf

From Time to Time We Review in This Department Such Books as May Profitably Be Added to the Housewife's Collection. We Welcome Requests for Information and Will Gladly Furnish Lists of Books Already Reviewed.

BETTER MEALS FOR LESS MONEY. By Mary Green. Published by Henry Holt & Co., New York, N. Y. Price $1.25.

While the author of this book makes no pretence that her recipes are the cheapest possible, she does contend in the preface: "For those who would continue to serve their households well, and whose allowance for food has not kept pace with the prices, there is only one alternative; that is to use more of the cheaper foods and to prepare and combine them so skilfully that economy shall not be a hardship." She goes on to say with equal truth that "good meals depend not so much upon expensive material as upon care and good judgment in the use of the ordinary material."

The general suggestions for economy are valuable. For instance, the considerable expense of flavoring extracts is noted and the advisability of using grated rinds and spices in place of the costly extracts is advised. Again, the author points out that most cooks use too much baking powder, asserting that if the biscuits, muffins or cake are quickly and lightly handled and carefully baked, one and a half teaspoonfuls of baking powder to each cup of flour will be just as effective as the two teaspoonfuls usually recommended.

A number of recipes for meat substitutes are given, and others in which a small amount of meat is used merely as a source of flavor. Also valuable at the present time are the recipes for bread, muffins and biscuits in which cornmeal, graham, bran, barley meal and whole wheat flour take the place of white flour.

THE MINIMUM COST OF LIVING. A Study of Families of Limited Income in New York City. By Winifred Stuart Gibbs. Published by The Macmillan Company, New York. Price, $1.00.

This is not a theoretical discussion; the actual expenses and needs of real families are recorded and discussed and, from the basis of "barely living" one can build up the budget systems of families of varying incomes.

When a woman—who could not add—became so impressed with the desire to get the good out of a budget that she laboriously grouped all the numbers of one denomination together, made separate additions of each group, and then attempted the grand total by the same intricate process, it would behoove the "rest of us"—who can add—not to neglect the illuminating forecast of a family budget and an account book. Many who dwell happily far above the gulf of the minimum cost of living will find the book of personal helpfulness in addition to its great social interest.

The author, as supervisor of Home Economics for the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, had every opportunity to cover the ground thoroughly. Both the social worker and the home staying woman will find much that is of basic importance and much that is suggestive in the 93 pages of this little book.

PRINCIPLES OF COOKING. A Textbook of Domestic Science. By Emma Conley. Published by the American Book Company, New York. Price, 52 cents.

This is not a "cook book"; it is just exactly what it pretends to be—and a most interesting and useful little volume at that.

The housewife need not turn aside because of the term "textbook." Getting at fundamental principles is the simplest and most interesting way of going about cookery, just as it is in doing anything else. It helps you to meet emergencies and vary recipes to suit the larder and the occasion, as a mere scanning of recipes would never do.

Besides, it adds interest as well as efficiency to attack the problem from this angle. But the book is not all principles—there is plenty of illustration, in the way of "classic" recipes, so to speak.

All in all, for the space it takes up on the shelf and the small demand it makes on your purse, this book is an investment to be recommended to any housekeeper and especially to Madam Spring Bride.

Why Not Be a Pioneer Where Unfamiliar Foods Are Concerned?

THE foundation stone of food economy is the willingness to try new things. The tenacity with which the mind can cling to the barriers of custom was illustrated as amply during the recent food riots in New York as it ever was in a famine-stricken Hindu village—the only difference being that the New York East Siders absolutely refused to touch rice, and the Hindus starved in droves sooner than eat anything else.

This insistence upon trotting along a food rut is a never-ending encouragement to the food speculator. If the crops are short or the speculator has had good luck in cornering a big supply, the price of almost any staple may be run to a prohibitive figure, when at any moment the ultimate consumer could break the deadlock by refusing to buy that particular commodity and turning to something else that is equally nourishing and, to the accustomed palate, quite as appetizing.

Uncle Sam knows this down to the depths of his wise and kindly old heart, which is big enough and patient enough to educate every foolish child in his big family.

Just now he is hammering at this question of food prejudices, urging people to open their minds to the consideration of new foods, instead of keeping them closed as tightly as a clenched fist against everything that has not yet come into their little circle of experience.

It is no such hardship to substitute corn bread for wheat bread; in the South they would regard the wheat bread as a most unsatisfactory makeshift in the place of their beloved spoon bread and pones.

It is no confession of poverty to eat rice, which is not only nutritious enough to be the staple food in countries that cover about half the earth, but is the basis of many tempting delicacies.

It is no real deprivation to cut down on the meat supply. You will feel far more fit if you get the greater part of your protein from other sources.

And, says Uncle Sam emphatically, there is no excuse for any one to plead ignorance.

From planting to cooking, the whole subject is covered so clearly and plainly that a bank clerk, by following directions, could go out and raise a crop of potatoes, and the most carefully cherished debutante could make at least a stagger at cooking a good meal.

Camping Conveniences

By G. HAZELRIGG

THERE is always great danger to clothing, especially of children, from open camp fires. Preclude this by having all muslin and cotton garments rendered fireproof. This can be done by putting an ounce of alum in the last rinsing water or in the starch.

It is most difficult in camp to "keep" cereals, etc. Try putting a stone in the centre of a package. It will prevent the meal from heating.

You will find a roll of adhesive plaster, such as is used by surgeons, one of the greatest camp conveniences. It is just the thing for mending all sorts of rents—in clothing, raincoats, or even shoes or overshoes.

If you have any slippery walking or climbing to do, try putting strips of adhesive plaster on the soles of your shoes or rubbers. It may save you from a hard tumble down a slippery hillside.

If your hot water bottle springs a leak, use a strip of adhesive plaster to mend it. No camper should be without this universal necessity—a hot water bottle; though—if you forget it—in case of chill, cramps, etc.—all common camp ailments—use a hot stone from your camp fire, or a hot stovelid, if one is at hand. If you have a hot water bag too far gone for the adhesive plaster repairing, fill it full of hot sand or salt.

If you "can't find the cork" use a bit of the plaster over the top of the bottle. If the salt or pepper shaker is the kind with holes in the bottom, again use the plaster.

Ingenuity will suggest a thousand and one uses for the roll of adhesive plaster—taking the place of needle and thread, glue, hammer and tacks.

Things will scorch over the camp fire more than any other place. If not too badly burned take your pan quickly from the fire and stand it in a basin of cold water for a few minutes. Every trace of the burned flavor will be removed if the scorching has not been too deep.

To keep red ants away rub sassafras around. Sassafras may grow near your camp. It is a shrub with smooth, green bark and leaves shaped like an oak leaf. It is detected by its pungent odor. Paregoric will banish black ants. Borax will drive away either kind.

If you use candles in camp and wish to keep a night light, a very small piece of candle may be made to burn all night by putting finely powdered salt on it until it reaches the black tip of the wick.

Use your watch as a compass by holding it so that the hour hand will point directly toward the sun. The point between the end of the hour hand and the numeral XII on the dial will point directly to the south. A glance at the dial will show the other points of the compass. Suppose it is 4 o'clock when the experiment is made, and the watch face is held with the hour hand pointing toward the sun. A line drawn from the centre through the numeral II will point directly to the south. Should the hour be 8 o'clock, with the hour hand pointing to the sun, the exact south will be indicated by the numeral X.

If you have lost your bearings in the daytime, this is a splendid bit of information to have. If at night, you always have the "Big Dipper" away up in the sky with its lower lip or "pointers" forever proclaiming the true north.