

HOUSEHOLD

MRS. S. C. BUTCHER

Communications for this department may be sent to Mrs. S. C. Butcher, Ellensburg, Wash., or direct to The Ranch. All questions will be carefully answered; contributions for publication are welcome.

Seasonable Hints.

When watering house plants add two tablespoonfuls of household ammonia to each half gallon of water.

Copperas dissolved in water, one-fourth pound to one gallon, is a good disinfectant. If poured through the sink or drain occasionally it will keep it clean and wholesome.

Have rubber heels put on your shoes for every day wear and you will be surprised and pleased with the result. The rubber acts as a cushion and relieves the nervous strain on the back.

An old fashioned fly destroyer is one-half teaspoonful of ground black pepper, one teaspoonful brown sugar and one teaspoonful of sweet cream. Mix well together and place in the room on a plate.

Make cushions, for every day use, of wash goods. They wear much better and may be laundered easily. The barred linen toweling embroidered with a simple pattern, of fast colored floss, is very pretty.

Not many of the colored fabrics can withstand alkalis, such as washing soda and washing powders. Colored bordered towels and table linen should not be washed or boiled with the white clothing when strong soaps or alkalis are used.

For croup take half a teaspoonful of pulverized alum in a little molasses. One dose will usually give relief. If not, repeat after one hour. Or use a teaspoonful of lard and molasses or a tablespoonful of melted butter. Also put a piece of flannel saturated in camphorated oil upon the chest.

Turpentine is of great value in the household. It is a sure protector against moths. Drop a little in the bottom of the chests, drawers, and cupboards. It will render the garments secure from injury during the summer. You will keep ants from closets and store rooms by putting a few drops in the corners. It will destroy bed bugs and drive them away if thoroughly applied to all joints and crevices in the bedstead.

Strawberry Recipes.

Strawberry Short Cake.—Make a rich flaky crust as for pies, roll thin and bake. When done remove from the oven; have strawberries sweetened and mashed fine, put a layer of this on one crust, then another crust, another layer of berries and so on until the short cake is the size desired. Place in the oven and let it heat through. Serve while warm with cream.

Strawberry Float.—One pint strawberries, one pint boiling water, one cupful of sugar, four level tablespoonfuls of corn starch, one tablespoonful of lemon juice. Put the sugar and corn starch into a sauce pan, mix thoroughly, pour in the boiling water and stir constantly over the fire until clear. Remove from the stove, add the lemon juice and berries. Serve, very cold, with cream.

Preserved Strawberries.—Wash the strawberries before they are stemmed by placing them in a colander or sieve and plunging them up and down in cold water; then stem them as quickly as possible after washing. Allow one pound of sugar to each pound of berries. Put a layer of sugar in the bottom of the preserving kettle, then a layer of berries, another layer of sugar, and so on to the top or until as full as desired. Set them in a cool place until all the sugar has melted, then put on the back of the stove where they will

come to the boiling point slowly. Lift the berries with a fork or flat egg beater and place them gently into the jars in which they are to be kept. Boil the liquor rapidly until it is reduced one half, then pour it, while hot, over the berries, and seal. Berries preserved in this way will keep if covered with paraffine wax and paper.

Strawberry Toast.—Eight slices of buttered dry toast, one cupful of strawberries, one cupful of boiling water, one cupful sugar, two level tablespoonfuls corn starch, quarter cupful of orange juice. Mix the sugar and corn starch well together, pour the boiling water over and cook, stirring constantly, until thick and clear. Remove, add orange juice and berries, pour this over the toast and serve immediately.

Arsenic in Wall Paper.

Before buying cheap wall paper, especially where green is used in the colorings, one should take a small piece and test it to see if it contains arsenic. Lay it in a glass and pour in enough household ammonia to cover it, let it stand a few moments then drop in a piece of nitrate of silver (lunar or stick caustic) and if a yellow precipitate forms as it dissolves there is arsenic present and the paper should be rejected. It is very injurious to the health to sleep in a room where the paper contains arsenic. The first symptoms of the poisoning are headaches, pain in the eyes, itching sensation back of the pupils and generally nausea of the stomach.

To Get Rid of Ants.

Ants become very troublesome if they once find their way to the pantry and cupboards. There are various ways of driving them away. Some use poisonous substances, but these are not advisable as they may be carried into the articles of food, so the best way to do is head them off. They have regular roads to travel and if the pantry is a tightly-built room there will be no trouble in finding their paths. When this is done lay a cloth string saturated with turpentine or kerosene or sassafras tea and cayenne pepper directly across their path and they will turn back without crossing it. If the pantry is not tightly built use a spray and fill all crevices with either of the three substances above mentioned. One application often proves sufficient. If it does not you may be sure you have not crossed their trail.

Correspondence.

Mrs. A., of Portland, Ore., writes:—I find the earthen pots for house plants very expensive. Would it do to use tin cans for my geraniums and how shall I decorate them? I am a lover of flowers and would have more of them, if I knew what varieties were of easy culture. What care does the dahlia require and can geraniums be kept over winter in the cellar?

Geraniums do much better when grown in tin cans than in any other pot. They bloom better in small and medium cans, as they fill the cans with roots and spend their strength on blossoms instead of making a luxuriant growth. Before potting your plants see that your drainage is good. Make a few holes in the bottom of the cans with an awl or nail. Then put a few pieces of broken crockery or small stones in each one of them and fill up with a good rich, light soil. The cans should be painted as a painted can does not get to looking old and shabby and it is also easily cleaned. Where geraniums are used for outdoor culture, they should be dug in the fall before danger of freezing. Shake the dirt off the roots and hang, roots upward, in a light cellar. In the spring remove all dead branches and plant them in the open ground. They

will soon be blooming. For profusion of blossoms and ease of culture perennials are the most satisfactory plants. Carnation pinks, sweet williams, perennial phlox, lilacs, syringas, snowballs, and flowering almonds are all very pretty and require so little care. The early spring flowering bulbs are easily grown and bloom at a time when other plants are resting. Jonquils, hyacinths, lily of the valley, narcissus, tulips and crocus will all give perfect satisfaction. Try them. Of annuals the old varieties are always the best. Sweet peas, phlox, petunias, asters and marigolds are all well known. Dahlias should be started in the house in March and transplanted to the open ground when danger of frost is past. Plant in light rich soil and give plenty of moisture. As soon as frost spoils the foliage the tops should be cut down and the roots left in the ground for several days or until danger of freezing, then dig and dry the roots and store them in a cool dry place where they will not freeze.

Jessie M.:—To brighten the colors of your carpet sweep it well to remove all the dust possible. Put a gill of household ammonia into a gallon of water, and wipe the carpet with a

soft cloth that has been wrung out of this solution. Another good solution is a pint of ox-gall to three gallons of water. Tea grounds are also very good. Have them damp, scatter thickly over the floor and sweep them off. They gather all the dust. To remove the tar spots apply turpentine and rub with a flannel cloth.

Those who are fond of soup should not throw away pea hulls. Wash them and place them in a porcelain vessel with water to cover them. Boil until tender, remove the hulls, thicken the liquid with drawn butter and season to taste. The hulls of peas are much better than the peas themselves for making soup, as the flavor is richer and stronger.

Irrigation of arid lands has only begun in eastern Oregon, and the future will no doubt make startling developments of the richness of the desert wastes in that portion of the northwest.

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