

Useful Household Utensils

By Ellen Wise

THE planking of food on the special plank, made for the purpose, has proved so popular that a new plank has been made especially for the planking of the rice of this dish. It is heart-shaped and grooved so that the liquid can run down into a little receptacle at the base of the plank, leaving the rice high and dry for service. It is served on the plank. This is the most sensible way of cooking and serving this dish that has yet been devised. The time has gone by when food was cooked and served at the averaged table with the rice still in place. The rice is now treated as a separate dainty, and the special plank for rice alone is the logical outcome of this.

There is a tendency to extend this plan of serving dishes in the cooking utensil in which they left the fire. A special plank, of course, lends itself readily to the idea, for it is not at all unsightly. It would not be possible to serve dishes of many varieties in this way, but so far as it is possible to do so, cooking receptacles are being made with this object in view.

The fancy has brought into prominence the casserole cooking that is in vogue in other countries, and casseroles can be placed in attractive looking, nickel, silver holders and sent to the table just as they left the fire, are finding ready purchasers.

One of these is shown on this page. It can be seen that such a device would be an ornament to any table and the idea of serving dishes in such a way, without transference to a second receptacle, is such an admirable one that the casserole is sure to be popular and lasting.

For house cleaning a number of useful devices are being shown just now. There is a large variety of the new household carryalls to select from. One that is light and well adapted for the work of holding the half dozen or so of implements and cloths that are necessary during the cleaning time, is illustrated on this page. It is of enameled metal, light, strong and durable. There is a place on the side for the scrubbing brush, a shelf for the soap, a pail for the water and a general utility department for the cloths or whatever is wanted on the cleansing excursion around the house.



ONE OF THE CASSEROLE CARRIERS FOR SERVING DIRECT TO THE TABLE.

Another heater has been invented. This one's chief charm is its simplicity. Observe the little flat thumb piece, about half way up the stem in the picture. This is the secret of the working of this heater. All you have to do is to move this up and down with the thumb and finger and around with the paddles of the heater, working with all the enthusiasm of one of the high-priced heaters, but without any turning of handles or pumping up and down of unresponsive mechanism.

Covers for Hot Dishes.

Who has not seen cranberries or puddings or sauces taken from the fire and set on a table or window ledge to cool with no thought of the dust or germs they are harboring?

While a tin or earthen lid should not be placed over hot food, as it generates a steam which may spoil the taste, some cover should be provided. Large paper bags, such as are used by grocers for fruit, or ten pounds of sugar, are excellent to slip over the top of the dish. It should be loose enough to let the steam escape at the sides.

Even better are squares of cheese-cloth or fine muslin neatly hemmed and weighted on the corners with small leaden weights or heavy blown buttons to prevent the cover blowing away or sagging into the dish in the center.



THE PLANK ESPECIALLY FOR SHAD ROE.

LAUNDERING LACE AND MUSLIN CURTAINS

By Marion Harris Neil, M. C. A.

LACE and muslin curtains may easily be laundered at home, and that without any great expenditure of time or trouble if the matter is gone about in a scientific manner.

A dry, mild day should be chosen for the operation. First shake the curtains before wetting, or hang them up and brush them dry with a soft brush to get rid of the superfluous dust. Then soak in cold water and borax—one tablespoonful to two gallons of water—for an hour or two. This will remove all traces of old starch and will facilitate matters greatly. Squeeze them well in the water, then pass through a wringing machine. Wringing by hand tears the delicate fibers. Wash in warm water, making a lather with soap jelly. Work them up and down in this, squeezing and pulling them through the hands. If not clean after the first washing, repeat the process.

Rubbing of all kinds must be avoided and it is always dangerous to wash curtains by machinery. Rinse them in the usual way, first in warm water, then in plenty of cold, to insure perfect cleanliness and a good color. Pure white curtains may have a little blue either added to the last rinsing water or mixed in with the starch.

If two ounces of alum be dissolved in one gallon of water, it will prevent

Apply a few drops of each bearing every time the machine is used. The rollers must be dry when in use. When through with the machine, release the pressure from the rolls by loosening the springs. When not in use, cover the mangle with a blanket, or some other covering to keep dust from the machine.

When mangling the clothes take them from the line while damp or just before they are quite dry, and fold them straight without wrinkles. Do not sprinkle quite as much as for regular ironing, if the clothes are dry. Leave them folded for a couple of hours, so that the dampness will become even.

After mangling put the goods on a clothes rack or similar article to dry, before they are packed away. Large pieces, such as tablecloths and sheets, should be folded twice with the hems at the ends, and fed into the machine straight and lengthways, care being taken that they do not wrinkle in going through the machine.

Bring them back through the machine and fold in the middle, putting them through and back again. They should be folded to the size desired. Small pieces, such as napkins and towels, may be mangled first flat and out through the machine again at each fold until folded to the size desired.

If lace curtains have had an accident or are worn in holes, do not attempt to dress them. A much better plan is to cut a piece the required size from an old curtain, dip it in starch, then press it over the rent with a hot iron. The defective part will thus be invisibly mended until next washing day.

Muslin Curtains.

Muslin curtains are a little more troublesome to do up than lace, inasmuch as they require to be ironed. The washing should be done the same as the lace, but the rinsing operation must be very carefully performed.

After bluing them it is a good plan to rinse them again in clean, cold water. This gives them a beautifully clear color, not at all suggestive of the blue bag.

Should the curtains be at all inclined to be yellow, or if they are very much soiled, they may be allowed to stand for twenty-four hours in cold water to bleach.

The starching must be carefully attended to and after the curtain is squeezed out of the starch, it should again be dipped into fresh clear water, squeezed and well clapped between the hands before it is dried. This removes all extraneous particles of starch and preserves the clear and semi-transparent look on which their beauty depends.

After the curtains are taken from the clothes line they should be very carefully folded, rolled tightly, and left for three or four hours before ironing. It will be understood that they are not left on the line to get bone dry and hard, but just dry enough for ironing. A slight sprinkling with warm water before rolling will be necessary if they are too dry.

Having the ironing table ready the ironing may be begun.

Boiled Starch.

To make boiled starch allow one tablespoonful of starch to two tablespoonfuls of cold water, add half a teaspoonful of borax and a small piece of wax candle. This keeps the iron from attacking.

Mix these ingredients until they are quite smooth and creamy looking, then pour on boiling water, stirring carefully all the time until the starch is cooked and becomes transparent looking.

It should then be strained through a piece of muslin and the basin covered with a plate to prevent a skin forming. If the starch is too thick it may be diluted with cold water and this should be added as soon as possible after it is made.

Another method of making clear starch is to allow a quarter of a pound of starch to one pint of water, mix as in last recipe, then make the water a little more than lukewarm, put in the starch and stir it slowly over the fire until it just boils and no more.

To prevent the starch being too sticky add a small piece of soap. Strain if necessary, pour it into a basin and cover until cold.

A good ironer will make very few wrinkles, but if they should occur a damp handkerchief rubbed over the place and reironing will efface them. A piece of beeswax put in a cloth and used to rub the iron will prevent it sticking.

If curtains are lined, iron the linings first before stretching and pinning out to dry; and when ironing, iron from the middle towards the sides, so that if there is any fulness it may come to the edge, where it will show least. Ironing curtains and the use of too much starch will soon make the strongest lace wear out.

Dark silk-lined curtains may be cleaned by grating potatoes in a little water and using the clear liquid for sponging over the material. Then go over the curtain with a clean cloth wrung out in cold water and iron through a damp cloth.

Curtains past their first youth should not be starched, then they hang more closely.

Good tops of long curtains may be used for short bedroom curtains. Window curtains look much better if they are of one color. One window with white curtains and others with cream spoil the appearance of the house from the outside.

SUMMER DRAPERIES—By C. T. Herrick

HOW many do you leave up during the summer? What hangings do you keep at your windows? What sort of table covers and furniture covers do you use in the hot weather?

There are some women who seem to think it makes no difference if the same hangings are used for summer as for winter. Thick portieres and curtains, woolen, or silk and wool table covers, the damask or plush upholstery unmitigated by a cotton or linen protection—these you see in July as in December snows.

Does some one say "I can't afford to have one set of furnishings for winter and another for summer?"

If you take that ground you show a measure of short-sightedness, which indicates that you need mental spectacles. Put them on for a moment and look at the subject more closely.

Consider your draperies, first of all. If they are of heavy material, they catch dust and perhaps fade in the glare and exposure of the open windows, the hot weather compels. Moreover, they seem to hold heat in their folds and make you feel warmer than is necessary.

The thick covers of the chairs have an even more positive effect. If you have a cane-seated chair, or one covered with leather or linen, in your sitting room, see how a caller will gravitate to that rather than to the plush covered seat. Comfort is found in the one, discomfort in the other. On the ground of economy, also, the unprotected plush cover is a mistake. By the fall the dust will be ground into it and it will look like an old piece of furniture, even though it may have been bright and new in the Spring.

Do you see, then, how the changes I suggest spell economy as well as comfort?

I do not mean to advise anything so much beyond the reach of most housekeepers as a different set of furnishings for each season. The very wealthy might perhaps be able to afford it, though they don't. But it is within the power of housekeepers of modest means to achieve a change and refreshing of their rooms, which will render these different in appearance to their usual winter trim.

Take an account of stock so far as your furnishings are concerned and set yourself to work to see how you can make the apartments look cooler. The portieres might well come down and after a thorough brushing and beating, be laid away until fall. They are very handsome, I know, and impart a look of cosiness to the room in the cool weather. But cosiness is not what you are seeking for just now. A sense of space and airiness is the object of your efforts and you have taken the first step towards this when you have banished the portieres. You will be astonished to see how the room takes a more spacious look at once and produces the effect of having a freer circulation of air than it possessed before.

With the portieres sent away the heavy curtains from the windows. They, too, must be brushed well and folded

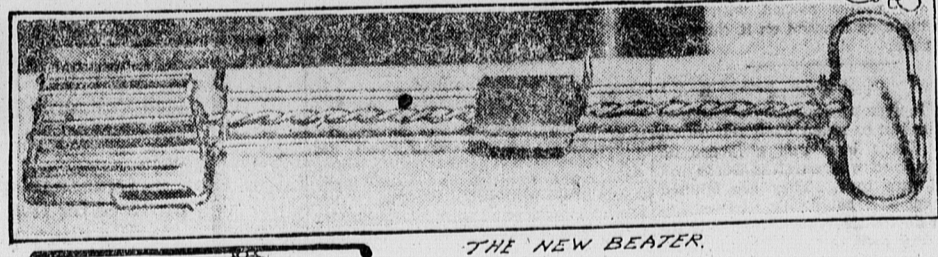
carefully, with measures of protection from moth, if there is woolen in the materials. Bestow the same treatment on woolen or silk and wool mantel lambrequins, or scarfs, or piano, or table covers. The house will look cooler for the change. A certain air of bareness is positively refreshing in summer. The ornaments that gather dust are also best off on the shelves of the china closet during the dusty season. Work of any sort is hard enough in summer without adding labor which can be avoided.

Now as to the window curtains. Your course with regard to them will be decided by the material of which they are made. I have already advised taking down the thick draperies at the windows and in some circumstances it

perhaps you follow the wisest fashion of all—if you can afford it—and have them dry-cleaned by a professional.

Whatever the method it is not cheap, either in work or money. The process has to be gone through at least once a year and the curtains are seldom improved by it. Don't you see the wisdom of taking them down now, rinsing the dirt from them and putting them away rough-dry, reserving the final starching and doing up until fall? You don't want to put them away with the dust in them, nor do you wish to let them remain starched all summer and perhaps be yellow and broken in the creases in the fall.

But now the windows are bare? Yes, and cooler so. I admit that they are not so attractive as when draped, and



THE NEW BEATER.

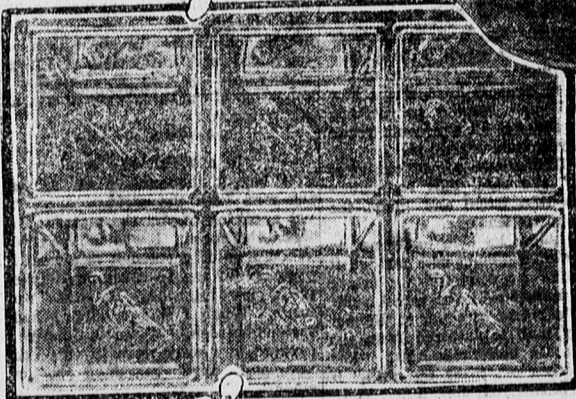
is well to follow the same course about the other curtains.

Suppose, for instance, that you have good lace curtains. You know what a trouble it is to get them clean. Perhaps you take the risk of sending them to a laundry with the possibility of their coming back badly stretched and torn. Perhaps you do them up yourself, with infinite pains and labor or

will sell them, full length, with ruffles or without. But ruffles catch dust and are not easy to launder, and the full length curtains sweep the floor as the wind blows and are soiled from the dust, which will sweep into the best-kept house when windows must be left open for air. Better therefore than the regulation draperies are the short white muslin curtains, plainly made, reaching

from the top of the window casing to the sill and allowed to hang straight or caught back at the sides. If something more elaborate is desired the "Dutch curtains," so-called, may be arranged.

This arrangement consists of just such plain white curtains as I have described, extending from the top of the window to the bottom of the sash and flanked on each side by outer and narrower curtains of cretonne. Over the top of the window is a sort of lambrequin of the same cretonne, made in a box pleating and reaching from six to eight inches down over the top of the white curtains. This is simple and pretty, and all the materials of which the draperies are composed can be washed and ironed with little trouble.



A NEW SIX BAKER FOR CORN MUFFINS.

ONE OF THE NEW HOUSEHOLD CARRYALLS

the curtains catching fire at any time. The curtains may then be dried, but a great saving of trouble will be effected if they are starched right off. In this case the starch will be required to be a little thicker than if the drying process is first resorted to.

Hot water or boiled starch must always be used and the requisite thickness will soon be learned by experience.

All being ready, enough starch to thoroughly wet one only should be put into a basin or small tub. Squeeze the curtain as dry as possible. Empty the basin and put in fresh starch for the next. The reason for this is obvious, the starch is first resorted to, the starch will be gradually get thinner.

The curtains ought to be dried quickly. Hang them over a clothes line exactly in halves, peg quite evenly and along the center, peg quite evenly and securely, and see that they hang right opposite to one another. Give a good drying day, half an hour or an hour, at most, will be sufficient time to leave them on the line.

They should be gently pulled into exact shape, folded into quarters, putting the scalloped edges neatly together, and put through a mangle. They are now ready to be hung and will look like new.

Mangles.

Mangles are most useful and as we always use one, perhaps a few words on how to care for a machine may prove

MRS. HERRICK'S EXCHANGE OF HOUSEWIFELY IDEAS

Braided Rugs.

My Dear Mrs. Herrick—Someone has asked how to make braided rugs. Here is the method: Cut rags broader than for carpets, turn edges towards center and braid with three strands; lay upon floor or table and sew the braids together on wrong side in whatever shape desired round, oblong or square. Some fill another rag in center turning both edges of outside rag over it before braiding when a heavy rug is desired.

If hooked rugs the correspondent means crocheted rugs I can tell her they are crocheted as simple mats are with a large strong needle. Stockings make very nice ones.

Then we make knitted rugs with large wooden knitting needles. Take as many stitches as you need for the width of your stripe, five or six inches being the general width. Knit back and forth like seam or top of stockings or what is called right and wrong until the stripes are long enough. Sew together in round, oblong or square rugs. For round or oblong crochet a center of the shape you wish your rug, round which to shape it.

Will someone tell me how to make a cosy corner in my parlor? I have a square window opening on the porch. The windows reach to the floor; two are in front and one at the side. It is in the front of the room but there are other windows and plenty of light. I have chenille cushions. Shall I put them up and down behind and have a window curtain woven as Mrs. A. suggests, of silk, be amiss to drape over a door in the same room with them? I was given the pair of curtains and have but one inside door in the room. I have larger curtains at the folding doors. Will someone kindly help me? The curtains are not both pairs alike in design, but are both on a red ground. The window is opposite the folding doors. Can I use them all in one room? Also, will Mrs. A. please tell me if I shall cut the silk for portieres the same width as rags for carpet, and shall I sew them lit or miss or each color by itself? Also, are the rags woven at the carpet weavers and how should the rags be prepared for them.

ENOLA.

I have no doubt that Mrs. A. or some

other reader can give "Enola" the information she desires about the rags for the curtains and also about the cosy corner. She surely deserves any help which can be awarded her in return for her generous assistance about the braided rugs as well as for the directions for footing stockings given a few weeks ago.

Digestible Cheese.

My Dear Mrs. Herrick—Do you know of any way to cook cheese so that it will not be indigestible? I am very fond of me. Can cheese be cooked in a way as good but not as hard on the stomach? R. T. N.

Try cooking it with bread crumbs, as in a fondou or in baked bread or cheese—alternate slices of bread and cheese soaked in milk and baked until brown and puffy, and cheese omelets. Does anyone else know of good and simple cheese dishes?

Geranium Leaf in Jelly.

My Dear Mrs. Herrick—Can you or some of the readers of your department

tell me what kind of jelly is improved by the addition of a geranium leaf? How is it used? Do you cook it with the jelly or put it in when you add the sugar to the juice? I would be most grateful for an answer to these questions. ELEANOR M. B.

Crab apple jelly is the only one to which I have heard of a geranium leaf being added. It is not put in until the jelly is ready to turn into the glasses. Then a geranium leaf is dropped into the bottom of each glass and the hot jelly poured upon it. I have used the leaf of the citron aloes or lemon verbena in the same way. Does anyone know of any other jelly to which such an addition is an improvement?

Home-made Moss Bags.

Dear Mrs. Herrick—A correspondent asks how to make moss bags at home. For several years I have used bags made of unbleached muslin, dipped into and thoroughly soaked in strong alum water. My method is to use a generous half cup of powdered alum to a gallon of boiling water. Put the muslin bags into the

liquid and let them remain in it until cold. Then hang the bags up to dry and drip without wringing the water from them. I do not think any kind of insect will invade these bags unless the eggs are already in the goods which are put into the bags. This alum water is useful in wiping off shelves and floors of clothes presses. A. M.

I am glad to receive this suggestion for my own sake and I have no doubt it will be equally welcome to other housekeepers. I had not known of the value of alum as a menace to moth and other insects.

Hooked Rugs—An Inquiry.

Dear Mrs. Herrick—Will some one give me a direction for making rugs by hooking? I know you use net or something of the sort and hook wool, or pieces of stuff through, but I don't know how the pieces are fastened or any other details. Can some one help me out? R. Y. T.

I confess my ignorance. Can any of the clever workwomen who read this give the desired instructions?