The Home

GOOD RECIPES.

To keep Carpets and Rugs Clean—It is very important, especially in a dirty city, to clean one's carpets and rugs at least every three weeks with coarse salt and ammonia. Mix the salt and ammonia in a bowl together and sprinkle it all over the carpet or rug, whichever it may be. Then take a clean broom and literally scrub the carpet with the salt and ammonia, taking care not to neglect a single part of it. This will bring out the colors, and freshen them considerably.

How to Clean Wall Paper—Get the preparation that is made of dough at any wall paper store, and clean your own paper. Break off a little piece at the time, taking care to rub it up and down on the paper, and as the dirt rolls off, take a smooth rag and wipe it down as you go along. Turn the piece of dough as it gets dirty on one side, to the other side, and when the entire piece is dirty take a fresh piece and continue as before until the whole wall is cleaned. Some papers clean better than others.

How to Clean White Kid Gloves or Slippers—In cleaning gloves, take a little bowl of gasoline and dip the gloves into it, rubbing them as quickly as possible, and as hard as you can, then take them out and rub each finger separately until it is perfectly dry. The slippers are cleaned the same way.

How to Clean Furniture—Take a little warm water and ivory soap and wash just a little place of the furniture at the time, drying immediately. After this is done take a piece of chamois and rub it thoroughly until it looks glossy and bright. This is the way furniture is cleaned at furniture stores and is better for it than furniture polish, although a little of it may be used once in a while. It is best to clean the upholstered part of furniture with gasoline, rubbing a little at the time with a soft rag.

Six-gored skirt of gray cashmere arranged in narrow box-plaits at the side and back. Material required, cashmere, 45 inches wide, 5 3-4 yards.

MARKETING HINTS.

Always buy a small, hard cabbage in preference to a large, loose-leaved one—it will taste better and there will be more of it.

In buying asparagus, pick out the bunches with long, thin stalks that are green almost up to the butt of the stalk—they are younger, more tender and better flavored

If the skin of fowls peel easily it is a sign of youth. If the spurs of chickens are over one-quarter of an inch long don't buy them—it indicates old age.

Avoid dark-skinned potatoes with thickly-set eyes. The smaller the eye the better the potato.

To test eggs, place them in strong salt water. If fresh, they will sink.

Good flour will lump when pressed in the hands.

The best lemons are full and hard, and have thin skins.

Corset cover of French cambric, trimmed with Hamburg insertion and edging. Material required, cambric, 32 inches wide, 1 1-4 yards.

TO LAUNDER TABLE LINEN.

The greatest care is necessary in washing and ironing fine table linen. Linen should be slightly starched, unless one has the knack of ironing it while damp until perfectly dry, like French women do, which gives the proper stiffness. Let tablecloths and napkins get perfectly dry; then pull in shape, dampen, pack tightly and iron both sides, the right one first, to give the highly-polished surface. Fold napkins square and cloths lengthwise first, the center-line ever affording a guide to one setting the table to place everything exactly straight. Linen should be made very damp and ironed dry.

A WORD TO THE GUEST.

When paying a visit absent yourself in your own room or out of doors a part of the day; affect an occupation, if you have it not, and invent an excuse if necessary for leaving the family to seek the refreshment of solitude or their regular work. Above all do not wear a "What next?" expression as if you constantly expected some entertainment to be offered. A hostess should not be expected to be on demand all of the time.

NOT A HITCH OCCURRED.

HOW OUR ARMY WAS WHIRLED TO THE FRONT IN AFRICA.

Mastery of Transportation Problem as Shown by the British Authorities—The Splendid Results Achieved.

Julian Ralph, writing to the London Daily Mail, says on the subject, "How our army was whirled to the front;"

Now that we appear to see the end of the war and its trials and its tests, we can almost confidently say of one of its accessories that it has been wholly admirable; that it will be recorded in history as an almost perfect feature of an undertaking otherwise too much marred by blunders, flaws, and unanticipated obstacles.

I refer to the Cape Government railway system, by means of which the British fought a war in which they were obliged, as it were, to land troops and supplies at Gibraltar, and rush them to the Pyrenees at first and then on to Paris.

As this is literally a feat which Great Britain may yet have to perform between those identical points in Europe, it is of double interest to know that Cape Town is 600 miles from the Orange River, just as the Pyrenees are 600 miles from Gibraltar, and Pretoria and Paris are, respectively, 1,000 miles from Cape Town and Gibraltar.

NOT A HITCH OCCURRED.

To move 200,000 troops as fast as they can be landed, and hurry after them their tents and guns, horses, ammunition, fodder, and food, would strain the resources of a standard-gauge double-track trunk line in England; yet not a hitch occurred in the performance of this feat by the narrow-gauge single-track railway which we practically commanded in South Africa.

The Cape Government railways compose a system of, roughly, over 2,000 miles, which consists of three main lines; one from Cape Town, one from Port Elizabeth and one from East London. These so converge that all three terminate at Buluwayo in one direction, and at Johannesburg and Pretoria in the other, with a means of connection with Natal and Delagoa Bay.

The war crippled these railways at the point of junction with the railways of the Boer Republics, and the junction with the East London line with the other two main lines was actually destroyed. That was when the Boers took Stormberg Junction. One result of that was that the coal supply of the colony from the South African mines was cut off, and thereafter coal had to be brought from Europe—a doubly serious thing, because, in the first place, it became much more costly, and, secondly, it all had to be carried in the same direction as the troops and supplies, thus adding greatly to the difficulties of the transportation problem.

DUTCH DISLOYALTY.

The railway is presided over by the Railway Department of the Cape Colony Government, whose head is called the Commissioner of Railways. Unfortunately for Great Britain, the disloyal Bond was in control of the Government when the war broke out, and the world witnessed the amazing spectacle of a colonial government at odds with the Crown, and willing to subject itself to a charge of common feeling with those who had for nearly twenty years engaged in an underground conspiracy to drive the English out of South Africa.

To say the least, the Commissioner of Railways did not facilitate the assistance given by this railway to the Imperial forces. But he was rendered helpless by the fact that the complexion of the working force of the system, from the executives downward, was wholly different—wholly loyal.

The task before the loyal working force of the Cape Government railway was for every man to do his best, and for all to rise to the extraordinary occasion. They had to keep the civil traffic going as well as to support the enormous pressure of military business.

So long as the lines admitted of it, through train service for passengers, mails, live stock, and goods were maintained unimpaired, except that live stock and goods had to give preceded to military traffic.

IMMENSE TRAFFIC.

Between November, 1899, and the following February the railway carried for the military authorities 18,000 animals and 37,000 tons of stores on the Western line, and, on all lines, 70,000 men and 30,000 horses. In the first four months of this year, to April 30, the lines conveyed what were equal to 60,000 ordinary trucks, most of them many hundreds of miles. Of troops there were equal to more than 11,500 standard four-wheeled trucks carrying 30 to 40 men each. Horses and mules utilized the equivalent of 14,000 trucks and other military traffic used what were equal to 35,400 trucks. Most of these vehicles also made long runs, Kimberley being 647 miles from Cape Town, and Norval's Pont being about as far. These figures show that the railway operatives moved more than 500 trucks daily, including Sundays.

It must be borne in mind that the line upon which this feat was performed is not like one of the great trunk lines of Europe or America.

It is a single track road with a ruling gradient of one foot in forty along the first 500 miles out of Cape Town, the first 350 miles out of Port Elizabeth, and the first 300 miles out of East London. The curves, equally difficult to negotiate, are, some of them, of five chains radius, while many have a radius of six, seven, or eight chains. In addition, long distances separate the stations, which makes it difficult for trains going in opposite ways to pass one another, while the narrow gauge, three feet and a half, prevents fast running. The waterless character of the country renders necessary the carriage of water, even for the supplies of the employes at some of the stations. Water also had to be carried to the troops at Rensburg when there was fighting on the northern border of the colony.

COLONEL GIROUARD PRAISED.

It was Colonel Girouard who had the wit to parallel the civil railway system with his own military system, appointing an officer of the Royal Engineers to watch and treat with every man in an executive position on the railway staff. This is the Colonel Girouard, of Canadian birth, who so distinguished himself in the recent campaigns in Egypt, where he is still President of the Egyptian Railways.

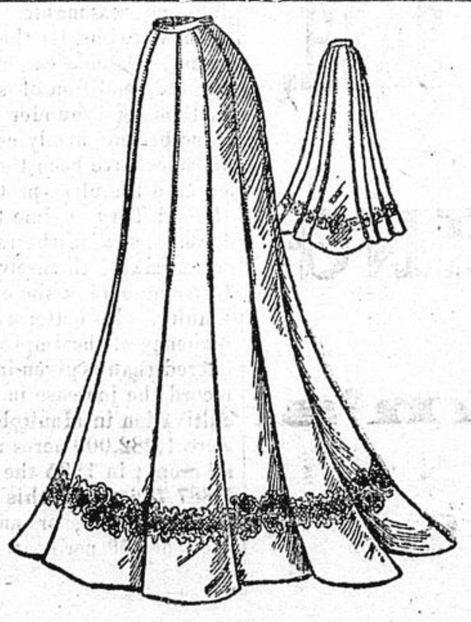
ECONOMY AT LONG RANGE.

City Boarder—Wasn't it rather expensive to substitute babed wire for rail fences on your farm?

Farmer—Yes, the first cost was considerable, but I calculate it will eventually save enough time to pay for itself.

City Boarder—How so?

Farmer—Well, you see, the hired hands don't stop to rest every time they have occasion to climb the fence.



Box-plaited skirt of blue viole, trimmed around the bottom with black net and cord passementerie. The skirt has six gores. Material required, voile, 45 inches wide, 5 3-4 yards.

HINTS FOR THE FARMER.

DRIVING FENCE POSTS.

It undoubtedly saves a good deal of hard work when building fences where posts are required to sharpen the end of the post and with a huge wooden beetle drive it deeply into the moist soil in spring as far as possible. But the plan has also its disadvantages, which are developed after a year or two, when frost lifts up the post every winter, so that if the top of the fences be heavy the post is soon in a tumble-down condition. The failure of the driving down plan of setting posts comes from the fact that usually the post is only driven down to the depth of the annual freezing in winter. When it comes to the "hard pan," where frost has not penetrated before, the post cannot be driven farther. Its point turns up or the top of the post will be split by the severe pounding it will receive. Yet unless the post is set deeper than the frost will penetrate it is very difficult to make it stand erect until decay has done its work.

In a soil where there is a deep underdrain posts may be set nearly to its depth by driving, and remain so long as the post lasts. The plan is to either build a pile of earth around the post so as to turn the water away from it, or to bore a hole through the post somewhere near the bottom, and drive a wooden peg the size of the hole through it and sticking out on either side so far as the post hole will allow. On this peg set a three cornered block that can be nailed both to the peg and the post. This makes additional obstruction for the frost to lift, and if the water has been turned away from the post, and can get off through the underdrains, the fence will remain firm so long as the post does not rot. When it does rot, it will most likely be at the surface, for there the changes of temperature and from wet to dry are more frequent than they are deeper in the soil. In most post fences the part above the ground is much longer than that below. It sometimes pays to take up posts and board fences that have been long in the ground, and after putting some diluted carbolic acid on parts that have decayed to prevent further progress, set them with the top part in the soil. If this top is well dried it should be immersed in diluted carbolic acid before being placed in the ground. It will then be much less likely to decay quickly.

TO GET BEST FRUITS.

The fruit grower of to-day must have the ability to adapt himself to new methods, new fruits and new markets. By use of cold storage and rapid transit the finest fruit from any land can be found in any large market, both in and out of season, for while the fruits of one hemisphere are first waking from their winter's sleep, on the other the summer sun has done its work and the ripened fruits are on their way to distant markets. With the world as a market, competition is keen, and only the best fruits in the best condition will pay. Furthermore, it generally costs much less per ton to produce large, first class fruit than the poorest, meanest specimens that are offered. Small fruit exhausts the tree more rapidly than large fruit. It will thus readily be seen that improved varieties which produce uniformly large, fine fruit are the more economical manufacturers of fruit, and also that the product is more salable.

The tree which needs a good deal of pruning to keep it in proper form and vigorous health should be replaced by one that has a better habit of growth, for every ton of wook taken unnecessarily from an orchard represents at least as much weight of fruit. Many varieties have two or three superior qualities but woefully lack in many others. The fruit grower of to-day is simply the manufacturer and should have the latest and best improvements. Of course there never can be one variety which will be best for all purposes, but it is perfectly possible to produce varieties which for their own special use can be relied upon to produce full crops of the best fruit without fail. All this can be done by careful selection and breeding.

FERTILE EGGS.

The Irish Homestead says;—Eggs are infertile, or, at least, fail to produce chickens, from various causes. Students of aviculture, and observers of the habits of birds of all classes, both wild and domestic, know wild birds, in almost every instance, hatch a young bird from every egg they lay, and that fowls, when they revert more or less to their original wild state, also produce a large percentage of chickens from their eggs. For instance, when a hen steals away from her flock, and spends most of her time in a semi-wild state, making her nest and depositing her eggs in a hedgerow, wood or some other secluded spot, she hatches a strong chick for every egg. The poultry-keeper who wants to produce strong, healthy chickens, and to have a large proportion of eggs fertile, should, as far as possible, follow nature in the care and management of his breeding stock. There are many things that may happen to prevent eggs hatching well. The laying hens may be too fat, or may be too closely confined in runs that afford them no facilities for taking exercise. The method of feeding and foods used may not be conducive to the production of fertile eggs in abundance. Green food, water and grit may not be supplied as regularly as they should. Even though the poultry keeper understands his business thoroughly, he is liable to overlook some minor point or other in their management which leads to failure, unless he studies habits and wants of breeding stock birds, which differ closely in many ways from those of fowls kept merely for producing eggs for table use.

SIGNALS AT SEA.

They Are Now Being Made With Beautiful Fireworks.

In the old days it was a mariner's belief that all signals to be effectual must be simple, but that was yesterday; to-day the case is different.

From the many beautiful combinations invented by Mr. Pain, the famous maker of fireworks, it would appear that that implicity once demanded by the old salt in respect of signals used at sea is a thing of the past, for signaling at sea is now accommodated with that picturesqueness associated with the pyrotechnic art.

Ten years ago and more it occurred to the firm named to bring out an entirely new system of signaling at sea by night, and they brought it before the notice of the leading steamship companies who adopted it at once. To-day the pyrotechnic system is general.

Every ship leaving port must carry a certain supply of signals for distress purposes, these consisting of rockets blue lights, detonators and so forth—in all, about 100 pieces; but it is left to the discretion of the various companies and owners to carry on board their vessels any other kind of signals, either for private use or, as we have said, for signaling at night

Up to the time of the creation of the newer system there was no recognized or organized method for noting ships that had passed in the night so that it was a difficult matter for officials stationed at points along the coasts of the various seas to determine the name and owners of a vessel as she passed, but now, if you were standing by the side of a Lloyd's agent, and in the black night out at sea you distinguished a blue light fore, red light amidships, blue light aft, and two rockets throwing blue red and green balls simultaneously the same officer would tell you that that was the signal of a boat of a certain line.

The law does not compel a ship's owner to carry such signals, but their practicability is so palpable that very few owners have failed to register their own peculiar private signals and to secure correctness this pyrotechnic system of signaling at sea is duly recognized.