WAYS YOU CAN SAVE PLUMBING BILLS THIS WINTER

BY H. L. PATTERSON.

I am a practical plumber, and for several years have been working for farmers almost exclusively. Here are some cold-weather tips, picked up in this work, that might help you prevent or remedy trouble brought on by your water pipes freezing this winter. I received the following letter from a farmer who has his home lighted with acetylene:

"Dear Sir: My gas machine froze up, and I went down cellar with a light to thaw it out with hot water. I supposed the gas was all out of it, and thought there was no danger. I was mistaken. As it began to thaw out, there was an explosion, and the bottom of the machine blew out. Fortunately nobody was hurt."

The gas machine referred to in the letter is one of the approved acetylene generators; there is no better acetylene generator made.

I know of several fatal accidents resulting from the indiscreet use of some kind of light around these machines, but have never known of one to be blown up from any other cause. An electric flashlight is absolutely safe to use, it cannot ignite any escaping gas; but a lamp, lantern, candle, or match, must be taboo.

CAUSE OF EXPLOSIONS.

Last winter many water fronts in kitchen ranges exploded. These explosions were caused by the pipes between the water front and the range boiler freezing solid, thereby shutting off the circulation. Then, when a fire was started in the range, steam formed in the water front with sufficient pressure to burst the water front.

One range that came to my notice looked as if a stick of dynamite had caused the destruction. The range was beyond repair, the front plate being torn out, the fire brick knocked through into the oven, and one of the stove lids had gone through the ceiling. It is well to make sure that pipes between range and boiler are warmed their entire length before a fire is started, if there is any possibility that they are frozen.

VARIOUS PROBLEMS.

Thawing out frozen pipes presents a different problem in almost every case. One man, living miles from any plumber, successfully opened a frozen sewer by pushing a garden hose in the pipe. The other end of the hose was elevated and hot water poured in through a funnel. This brought hot water in direct contact with the ice; and, as it melted, the hose was pushed forward until the ice was passed. The idea is borrowed from the plan plumbers use in steaming out frozen pipes; and, while slower, it is just as effective.

In locating the frozen section of a pipe underground I always look for places where the pipe runs under wagon roads, cowpaths, or walks. Where the earth is packed hard the frost strikes much deeper than in soft earth. Sod offers double the protection of plowed ground. A foot or two of loose small stones placed over a pipe, and the rest of the trench filled with earth, is excellent protection. The dead air spaces between the stones are the insulating medium.

It is important to exercise every precaution against freezing of underground pipes if a considerable thaw follows a very cold snap, for the frost drives in farther than ever when the weather first turns warm. I have known pipes to freeze up in April that had been all right throughout the winter.

During the first warm days it is well to keep the water running where possible, and use the same precaution that was observed during the coldest weather.

Essentials in French Polishing.

A perfectly smooth surface to work on is the first essential for successful French polishing. Nail-holes, cracks or other blemishes should be filled in and the article then treated with fine sandpaper. Every particle of dust and grease must also be removed.

If wood of a porous nature is to be polished it should first be gone over with a filler, made from whitening and turpentine mixed to a stiff paste and colored to the appropriate shade with burnt umber or other coloring matter.

The composition of French polish varies according to the nature of the work and the desired effect, but the simplest form consists of 60 oz. of shellac dissolved in a pint of denatured alcohol. Should any gum be included in the formula, the quantity of shellac must be proportionately reduced. Place the shellac and alcohol in a bottle and allow them to stand for about 48 hours. The bottle should be kept in a warm place. Before use, the mixture must be strained to extract any sediment.

A polisher's pad is required and is made from a piece of cotton-wool firmly folded into the shape of an egg, pointed at one end. This is inclosed by a piece of soft linen, not too fine, the ends being gathered up over the cotton-wool to form a handle. Open the pad and pour in a little polish at the back, never at the front. Dab the pad against the palm of the hand and bring the polish quickly through to the surface.

Cover the surface of the wood with polish, using a gentle, circular motion forming large figure of eight marks. Plenty of polish must be applied to the wood, but this needs to be done by successive coats, as the pad should never be more than moist. As soon as the coat becomes tacky it should be left to dry thoroughly before the next coat is applied.

To prevent the pad from sticking, the tip of the finger should be dipped in linseed oil and lightly dabbed once on its face. Do not stop in the middle of applying a coat or the polish will be liable to "pull off."

This process is known as "bodying in," and entails the application of about five coats, by which time a substantial shell of polish will have adhered to the surface. This will have a glossy appearance on which the traces of the rubbing pad will show. These marks disappear, however, and are replaced by the lustre when the final operation, known as "spiriting off," is carried out.

In spiriting off, the polish is gradually reduced by the addition of denatured alcohol till all the polish has worked out of the pad. The alcohol also must be put in at the back of the pad. Rub a trifle harder than before, still in the figure of eight method, until only alcohol is in the pad. Finally take a clear new pad and put a drop of alcohol into it, and rub fairly hard in the direction of the grain until the smears have disappeared and the surface has acquired the desired polish. The article should then be left to dry in a place free from draughts and dust. Great care ought to be taken at this stage to exclude grit, as scratches cannot be satisfactorily removed.

French polishing should always be carried out in a warm room.

THE WILFUL CHILD

BY MRS. J. KUBISTA.

Not until I was married and had children of my own did I discover how my mother overruled our wilfulness when we were children and got us to obey her without causing any disturbance; however, once I had learned her method I immediately applied it in the training of my children, and my success has won the admiration of all those knowing our family.

When my little daughter insists on wearing a certain dress contrary to my advice I don't stop to argue with her as to why she shouldn't wear it. I simply ignore her wilfulness, call her attention to some other matter and then go away apparently quite unconcerned. She may put the dress on and even wear it a while but her mind will be on the wrong she has done, and she won't be able to play with ease; back she'll go and put on the dress she knows I wanted her to wear.

If Robert fusses about going on an errand for me or insists on my waiting until he feels like going, I don't "nag" him; I simply go out-of-doors and get some little boy on the street to run the errand for me and as sure as can be, Robert will run the errand with him, a little ashamed of his disobedience.

When the children quarrel, I don't allow them to malign one another, nor do I wait for explanations of causes of the disagreement; I simply distract their attention with something else and they go back to their play, no one the victor or the loser.

There's a lot in that little trick of changing the subject or ignoring with deliberate calmness the stubborn wilfulness of children. It certainly does more good than a lot of angry words giving rise to the children's temper and your own. My mother used to say, "My children have no temper," and I now can say almost the same thing for by not arousing their temper I have not made them aware of its existence and what they have is abated by my diversion or my silence, unconsciously teaching them to control themselves by their own thinking and reasoning.

Of course, not all children can be governed with equal ease by the same method. Child psychology teaches that we should constantly study each boy and girl with the purpose of giving the timely aid that the individual, developing thought needs. But in every case quietness and confidence are strong influences towards obedience, thoughtfulness and pleasing manners.

Bathroom Suggestions.

The bathroom cabinet is frequently filled with a varied assortment of articles, some of which can be replaced by more useful implements. Small outfits for polishing and cleansing shoes can fill one corner of the cabinet, while a small clothes brush finds its place near by.

It is convenient to have on another shelf a small brush for cleaning the bathtub, together with a tightly corked, plainly labelled bottle of kerosene. If a gas flame of any kind is used in the room care should be taken not to open the kerosene while a flame is burning. Gasoline is splendid for cleaning tubs, faucets, etc., but it must not be kept in the house nor used near a flame. A small box of some cleaning powder added to this shelf saves many steps.

On the outside of the cabinet two small brass hooks, one on either side, will prove useful. Upon one can be hung a strip of canton flannel about five inches wide for wiping dusty shoes. It is more sightly if hemmed on all sides, and it must have a loop or ring fastened to one corner. The words "Shoe Cloth" embroidered in an outline stitch are a protection against misuse. At the other side of the cabinet can be hung a similar strip of cloth for wiping razor blades. This can be cut from old face towels or bath towels. Such strips also should be hemmed and a loop sewed to one corner.

The commode brush can be kept neatly in an oblong bag made of pretty cretonne or linen and lined with oilcloth or rubber sheeting. A number of large eyelets should be embroidered in the outer covering and in the lining near the brush end of the bag in order to allow the brush to dry. The top of the bag can be finished with a hem and draw-tape or ribbon. The tape or ribbon ends can be used as loops for hanging.

The rubber mat for the shower bath should be thoroughly dried after using. In order to have the mat in a convenient yet out-of-the-way place, it may be hung on two small brass hooks placed near the shower. Two loops of rubber can be vulcanized to each corner of one end or a piece of tape can be sewed across one entire end and a tape-loop or a brass ring attached to each corner. Another easy way to keep this mat is to have a small glass towel rod near the shower on which to hang the mat, without any loops.

In a bathroom with walls tiled half way up, one mother found it a problem to place towel racks low enough for the smaller members of the family. She solved this problem by fastening inexpensive towel rods to the bathroom door so each little one had her own towels within reach.

Wintering the Tractor.

When the tractor is to be laid by during the winter months, see that it does not suffer from its winter idleness. Give it a dry winter home under a tight roof. Neglect during the off-season causes more rapid depreciation than hard work.

In getting the tractor ready for wintering, drain out all of the water from the cooling system. To remove the water from the radiator alone is not always sufficient. Many makes of tractors have two or three drain cocks and all of these should be opened to remove all the water. Consult the instruction book given to you when the tractor was purchased. If the machine is equipped with a water pump instead of the more common thermo-syphon system, run the engine for a time during and after the water cocks have been opened. A very little water allowed to remain will do untold damage. If the engine is run, all this will be forced out.

See that all important bearings and highly polished parts are well oiled to prevent moisture from rusting the surface. To insure a good film of oil on the inside cylinder surface, run the engine at full speed, then cut the spark suddenly. This will leave the piston rings and cylinder walls well coated with oil.

Packing Bees for Winter.

When packing bees to winter outside, a few precautions should be taken as follows, says Prof. Eric Millen of the O.A.C.: If possible, bees should be wintered behind or inside a natural windbreak, as this tends to very much more successful wintering than where bees are wintered without windbreaks. The packing materials used should be some material that will pack fairly close and shed water to some degree. Leaves and shavings are the two most economical, and most readily obtained packing materials that the beekeeper can use. Care should be taken to see that mice cannot enter from the top, and this is usually avoided by placing a queen-excluder between it and the tops of the frames. A bridge or tunnel must be provided from the hive entrance to the outside of the packing case, so that the bees can fly when conditions are suitable. The outside entrance should not be deeper than ⅜ of an inch, but can be 4 inches or more long. This will prevent mice getting into the entrance. The colonies should have four inches of packing all around and underneath, with eight or ten inches of packing on top. Bees can be packed in cases singly, in twos or fours, but should not be packed in long stands with more than six in one stand. Packing should be completed by the middle of November, and earlier if possible. Never attempt to winter colonies in a room above the ground, unless an outside entrance is provided.

Embroidered Short-Cut.

Outline designs may be embroidered on the sewing machine if the pattern is simple. The result is pleasing and a real short cut.

Wind the bobbin with heavy mercerized thread of any suitable color. It is best to loosen the lower tension to give an outline stitch effect. For cable stitching the upper tension should be loosened and not the lower. Lengthen the machine stitch and stitch on the wrong side of the goods. The pattern, of course, must be traced on the wrong side. The colored bobbin thread traces the design on the right side. Different effects may be obtained by experimenting with white or black thread on the spool.

THE CANADIAN HOMEMAKER

A series of weekly articles covering

PLANNING . BUILDING . FINANCING
DECORATING . FURNISHING . GARDENING

Copyright 1926.

FLOWERING BULBOUS PLANTS FOR WINTER CULTURE

By Henry J. Moore.

October is the month to buy and to pot bulbs for culture in our living rooms. As a rule these winter flowering plants are not difficult to grow to perfection. There are, however, certain principles which much be observed in this as in other branches of endeavor.

The kinds of bulbs which are more generally grown in the home, than others, are Hyacinths ordinary and Roman, of which the latter may be forced into flower earlier. Tulips of many kinds, including early and late ones and Narcissi. These are the most popular of the so-called Dutch bulbs. Then we have Snowdrops, Crocus, Glory of the Snow, Meadow Saffron, Dog's Tooth Violet and Scilla. These last mentioned are all hardy and excellent for culture in pots where they should be planted close together. The Hyacinths, Tulips, and Narcissi being much larger should not be crowded so much in their pots.

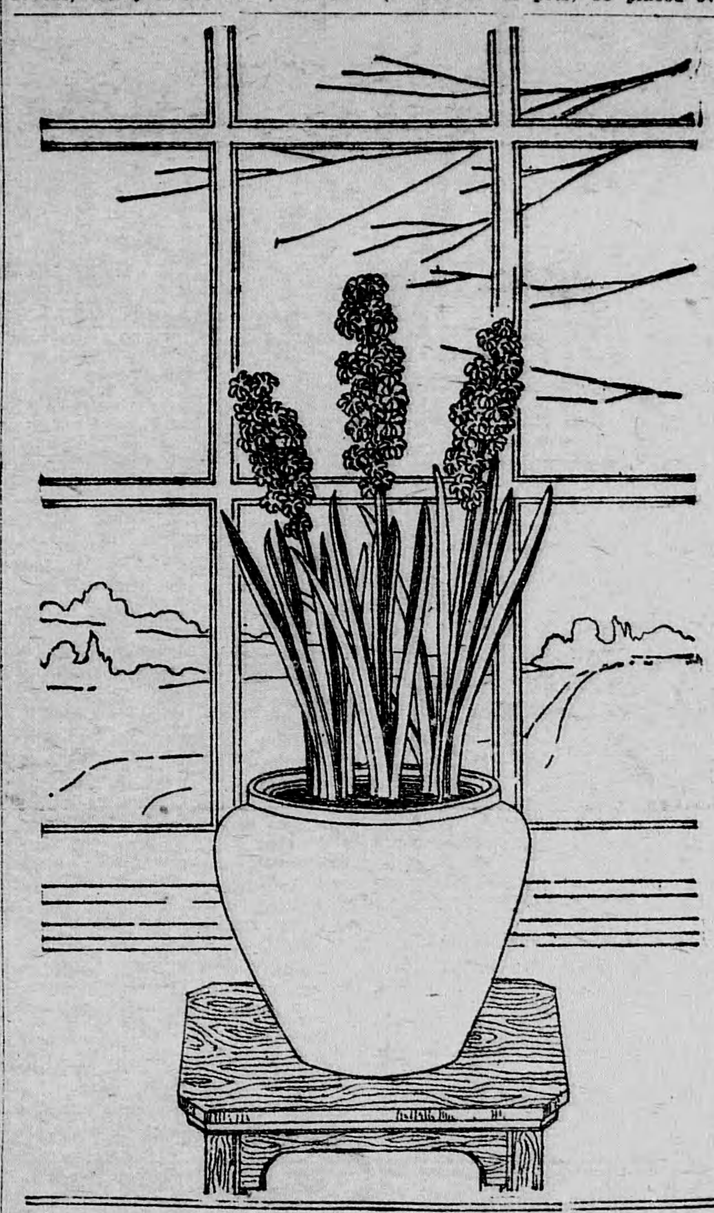
The best potting soil for winter flowering bulbs is one composed of one part of loam, one of leaf soil and a little sand. It is true the plants may be flowered in garden soil to which is added leaf soil or a little old and well rotted stable manure, as that for instance from an old hot bed. The pots used should be thoroughly washed inside and out and a layer of crocks (broken flower pots) be placed over the drainage hole to afford drainage. Upon the crocks should be placed a layer of fibrous material, that screened from the loam will do or leaf soil, or moss. This to prevent the potting soil from sifting down and clogging the drainage.

The potting soil should be uniformly mixed and be sifted through an inch screen, the fibrous screenings being used as forementioned for drainage. Upon this fibrous material should now be placed a layer of potting soil up to within two or three inches of the rim. This should be pressed down firmly and the bulbs be placed in position and then more soil be added and be firmed. With the exception of the Hyacinths and Tulips, the tops of which should protrude from the soil, the other bulbs may be entirely covered. In all cases, however, the space of about an inch should be left at the top of the pot to allow for the application of water. After thoroughly watering the soil the plants should be placed in a cool and dark position for a period of five or six weeks to allow of the formation of roots, before they are brought to the light to flower. Success will largely depend upon this, therefore, do not be in too great a hurry to have the plants flower. While the plants are going through this period of root formation the soil should be examined at least weekly to ascertain if water is again necessary.

When well rooted the plants may be removed to a cool, well lit room with a temperature of about 55 deg. F., and later, when the leaves and flowers become inured to temperature and to light, in perhaps a week the plants may be placed in the living room to flower and be enjoyed.

The longer the plants are left in the cool dark storage the longer will they be retarded, and it should be the practice to remove them to the room three weeks or so before the time they are required to flower. For instance if a few pots of bulbs were required for Christmas, these should be removed, leaving the others for later flowering to be removed to flower at any later or special time. In this way the time of flowering may be controlled.

With the exception of the Hyacinths and the early flowering Tulips, which should be discarded after flowering as they deteriorate (the Darwin Tulip however may be saved), all the bulbs mentioned may after they have been carefully and gradually dried off in their pots be saved. If stored away in paper bags they may in the Fall be planted out in the garden. Bulbs as a rule will not force successfully into flower in the living room two years in succession, but may after a period of recuperation (three or four years) in the garden be again used for indoor culture.



Soap Shampoo.

The writer has discovered what she thinks is an excellent way to make soap shampoo. Take a half-pint fruit jar and a cake of the kind of soap preferred for washing the hair. If the soap does not go into the jar easily, cut it into two pieces. Fill the jar over half-full with water, screw the top on and shake it till it is full of lather. Let it stand for a while, but every now and then shake it well. Add more water as the soap gradually softens and thickens it. This shampoo can be made any consistency wanted, and as it is used more water should be added to the contents of the jar. A cake of soap diluted in this way will last for several months.

Liquid soap can be made in the same way. If enough water is mixed with the soap, it will rise to the top after the jar has stood for a day or so, and can be poured off and put into a separate container.

Chicken a la King.

This is a particularly fine recipe for the always popular chicken a la king. Another nice thing about the dish, the directions for which are given below, is that it is just as good, even better, when reheated the following day.

Four tablespoonfuls of butter, 3 tablespoonfuls of minced green pepper, 3 tablespoonfuls of flour, ¼ teaspoonful of paprika, 1 tablespoonful of minced pimento, ¾ teaspoonful of salt, 2 cupfuls of thin cream, 2½ cupfuls of diced cooked chicken, ½ can of mushrooms.

Melt the butter and cook in it the green pepper until the latter is soft. Stir in the flour and seasonings. Add the cream gradually, stirring constantly. When boiling, set over hot water and add the chicken, mushrooms and pimentos.

Serve in ramekins, patty shells, or on toast.

One judges with his reason, but acts according to his character; that is the cause of most human inconsistency.

Fresh-water eels travel a distance equal to a quarter of the earth's circumference, about 6,000 miles, in their lives.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR WALL PAPER LIVE LOTS LONGER

BY JESSIE CRAWFORD.

If your wall paper is faded or soiled and you can't afford to repaper this fall, you may be interested in the cleaning stunts our Interior Decoration Department has worked out.

This letter from a farm woman started us experimenting:

"Dear Editor: Decorators are always telling the housekeeper that dingy walls make dingy rooms! Goodness knows we can't doubt the fact with evidence on every side. The question is, what to do about it?

"One can't repaper every year, yet with flies and dust and coal smoke walls refuse to stay clean.

"What do you advise?"

CLEANING FACTS.

Here are the cleaning facts we discovered:

The first paper we cleaned was dulled with dust and coal smoke. It had a greasy feel. This paper was scrubbed with small burlap bags filled with bran. The bran seeping through the meshes of the burlap cleaned the paper spotlessly. Oatmeal gives just as good results.

Another cleaner for this kind of dirt is made of one-half ounce of powdered borax, one pint of boiling water and enough flour to give it a doughy consistency. This substance is used on the wall like a gum eraser. You can buy a similar commercial cleaner if you don't want to bother mixing it.

Grease is easily removed by placing a piece of blotting paper over the spot and pressing it with a hot iron. Another remedy is a paste of whiting or French chalk mixed with water. Apply this to the spot and allow it to dry overnight. The next morning it should be brushed off.

To avoid spots it is advisable to varnish the kitchen and bathroom wall paper. This is easy to do and gives a durable wall that can be cleaned with soap and water. Apply two coats of white waterproof varnish, allowing each to dry thoroughly before putting on the next.

PAINT ON PAPER.

When the background of a gay bedroom paper has faded into gray you can paint the entire wall with blue size, tinted with dry kalsomine water-color paint. This gives a warm glow over the paper, the brighter colors of the design showing through in an interesting pattern.

In one small bedroom where the flower design had faded we painted the flowers over with oil paints and a small brush. It made the whole room bright and new. The hand-painting process is a long, hard piece of work if your room is large, but over a small wall space it is well worth the time.

If your paper shows any tears or mars from leaks try patching it. Take a small piece of paper and cut out the new piece around the design instead of shaping it in a circle or square. The piecing will not show so much this way. If the old paper has faded put the new piece in the sun for a day until it has faded the correct color.

When it is necessary to mend a plain paper, the best way to conceal the line of the patch is to scrape the edge down to a very thin surface, tearing it irregularly instead of cutting it evenly across.

Surprised.

Harold and Elvin went to their first party. As it was a party for little people, their mother told them they would no doubt get only simple refreshments. But the refreshments were quite elaborate. After the party the mother of their small hostess said pleasantly:

"Well, boys, did you have a nice time?"

"Yes, thank you," said Harold.

"And did you get enough to eat?"

"Yes, thank you; much more than mamma thought we would get."