

Her Spinster Aunts

By M. DIBBELL

"It is either plant the peas twelve inches deep the first of April, or not at all," snapped Charlotte Graydon, with the air of one whose decision is not to be questioned.

Her sister Julia was fully prepared for the fray and answered instantly: "It is either plant them eight inches deep the last of April, or I shall leave this house forever."

The two spinsters paused at this point to glare fiercely at each other, while their niece, Adelaide, wildly racked her brain for the oil of some calming thought to cast upon the troubled waters. Speedily an apparently very simple solution of the difficulty came to her.

"Why not plant half of them on the first of the month as you wish, Aunt Charlotte, and then the other half at its end to suit Aunt Julia. In that manner you would find whose way was really best," she suggested. "Never!" said Aunt Charlotte positively. "It is just a sinful waste of Nature's supply to use it as Julia proposes. I think it is time the question was finally settled; for fifteen years we have lived in this house, and never in all these years have we had a single sweet pea of our own—simply because of Julia's wicked obstinacy."

"Plant everything to suit yourself, and I will do the same, but not within many miles of you," answered her sister. "It certainly is time that this question was settled, Charlotte, and I will do my share toward settling it by leaving you the place to do with as you choose." Aunt Julia turned and left the room, closing the door not too softly in her wake.

"Ah, Aunt Charlotte, don't let such a little thing as a few wretched sweet peas separate you and Aunt Julia," cried Adelaide in dismay.

Julia is old enough to decide for herself; if she prefers to go off on a

long enough at the business for your word to carry such weight as Macgregor's," answered Adelaide; "but I will tell you why I want to see him so much. Perhaps you can make some suggestion."

She explained the trouble over the planting of the sweet peas, and told of Aunt Julia's threat.

"How would a booklet on the subject do, until Macgregor returns?" queried the interested young florist. "I know he wrote one especially on sweet pea culture several years ago, and has received many letters from persons who have tried his method and been delighted with the result. As it bears his name, perhaps it might carry weight."

"That is a first rate idea," assented Adelaide, gratefully. "I hope it may settle the whole question, for the next best thing to Macgregor himself would be something over his name."

The obliging young gardener at once went for one of the booklets, and quickly returned with a copy. "And you might tell them that Macgregor's sweet peas have taken first prize at the state fair for five straight years," he remarked, as he gave it to Adelaide.

Adelaide hastened homeward with the light of victory in her eyes. Upon entering the big dining-room where she had left Aunt Charlotte she was surprised to see that Aunt Julia was also seated in the bay window, working industriously at her tatting. With all the impetuosity of youth she waved aloft the small but important booklet, and cried:

"Here is an authority neither of you can deny, for you have known Macgregor for centuries, and this is what he says about sweet peas."

Her aunt gazed at her in astonishment, but it did not take their energetic niece long to explain the purpose of her walk and the information she had acquired.

"And what can you want better than the way that has won the state prize for five years?" she inquired in conclusion.

Hastily throwing on her wraps she seated herself between the two aunts and started to read them Macgregor's booklet. After several pages of general directions as to soil, situation, etc., the rule for planting was reached. To this both aunts listened with intense interest, while Adelaide slowly read:

"Plant in trench 18 inches deep early in March, as soon as ground is workable."

That was all as to planting, and Adelaide looked up saying triumphantly: "So neither of you was right, you see; and I hope that next month you will have a good long trench of sweet peas planted according to Macgregor's directions." She jumped up and gave each aunt a good hard hug. "Now will you be good, and live together in peace and harmony?" she asked in high delight.

Both Aunt Charlotte and Aunt Julia hastened to assure her that such was their intention, and that they should certainly try Macgregor's rule for sweet pea planting. Aunt Charlotte added:

"I think it would take more than a flower to part Julia and me, in spite of all her threats; but we are both glad to have the matter settled peacefully. I am sure, even if we are fond of squabbling. You are a dear, thoughtful child, Adelaide."

The following evening on answering a ring at the door herself, Adelaide beheld to her surprise Macgregor standing before her, while behind him she saw the face of the obliging young florist, who had presented her with the booklet. Macgregor spoke at once.

"We have come to see if any more help is needed to settle the disagreement between your two aunts. Young Loftin Macvane could not rest until he knew that the advice he gave was sufficient to smooth things over?"

"Come in and see for yourselves," laughed Adelaide. "Your booklet acted like a charm. Macgregor, harmony now reigns supreme."

The aunts were pleased to see their old friend Macgregor, and also to meet after so long an absence, the youngest of the large Macvane family. All the Macvane youngsters had been educated abroad, and had seen little of their native land during the educational period. Young Loftin Macvane had been in the United States for over a year; but he had been traveling all about the wildest parts of the west, as he took a great interest in forestry. Anything in the way of plants appealed to him, and when a week before he had returned to the big Macvane homestead he at once donned working togs and became Macgregor's enthusiastic assistant.

This first call with Macgregor was the first of many young Loftin made, and the two maiden aunts awoke before long to the realization that a very sweet little romance was being enacted before their eyes.

"And just to think, I might have gone away again, as I intended, and never seen you, if your own dear, tender heart had not led you to me—just because you could not bear to see your blessed aunts unhappy," Young Loftin was saying one summer day soon after their betrothal to Adelaide. "You are an angel of goodness."

MOST LUSCIOUS FRUIT

THREE WAYS OF SERVING DELICIOUS STRAWBERRY.

As a Sauce It Will Be Appreciated—Method of Preparing Individual Short-Cake — Combination With Rice Something New.

Strawberry Sauce.—Rub one cupful of sugar and a half a cupful of butter to a cream. Add the beaten white of one egg and one cupful of strawberries thoroughly washed.

Individual Strawberry Shortcake.—Make dough of one pint of flour, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one-half teaspoonful of salt, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, four tablespoonfuls of butter. Mix and sift, add butter and milk enough to make a dough that will roll easily; roll and cut with large cutter and bake in flat or gem tins. This will make twelve cakes. Filling for shells: One quart of berries, one cupful of powdered sugar creamed with tablespoonful of butter, and mixed with crushed berries. Serve with a mound of whipped cream. This makes an attractive dessert for luncheon or tea. Peaches make a nice filling also.

Rice and Strawberries.—Pour two cups of boiling water on one cup of well washed rice, add one teaspoon salt, cook in double boiler thirty minutes. Add a pint or more of milk and a heaping tablespoonful of butter, boil until perfectly tender and not too dry. Pour into a dish and let stand until cold. Dressing: One cup powdered sugar, one tablespoonful butter, beat to a cream; one cup fresh ripe strawberries and the well beaten white of an egg added last. In serving it put into each sauce some rice and on the rice place a liberal portion of the dressing.

CHOCOLATE AND FRUIT TARTS

Recipe for Dessert Dishes That Has the Sanction of Leading Woman's Journal.

Make the tarts of puff pastry, leaving as large a space as possible for the filling. In each tart place canned peaches or apricots, from which all the juice has been drained away, and pour over them a chocolate sauce. The sauce is made as follows: Boil one-half pint of milk and grate three ounces of chocolate. Mix a little of the milk with the chocolate until it is smooth; add the rest of the milk and let it boil up; then add one ounce of sugar and a tablespoonful of vanilla. If the tarts are to be used hot pour on the sauce as soon as it is finished and serve immediately, covering the top with whipped cream. The tarts may also be used cold, and in that case the sauce must be cold when poured over them.—Harper's Bazar.



ALL AROUND THE HOUSE

Iron silk on the wrong side—the iron will make the right side shiny.

Always keep a little water in wood-enails or tubs, otherwise they will crack and fall apart.

A bit of sugar dissolved in the water in which cut flowers are standing is an English way of keeping the blossoms fresh.

To keep pancakes from being greasy and flabby, do not have the batter too thick, and be sure that the fat is piping hot.

Bronze ornaments should be cleaned with a little sweet oil, polished with a duster and afterwards rubbed well with a soft cambric.

When postage stamps stick together do not soak in hot water; instead, lay a piece of sheer paper on top and pass over with a hot iron. This will loosen the stamps and not remove the gum on the back.

Turkey Filling Sandwiches.

Chop finely the meat of a left-over turkey. Put into saucepan, adding two tablespoonfuls of finely chopped celery, with salt and pepper to taste. Stir over the fire until hot. Then add a soft-boiled egg, and leave until cold. Spread the turkey mixture upon thin slices of buttered toast. Cut into halves or quarters, and place on a folded napkin.

Rusks.

Two cups raised dough, one cup sugar, one-half cup butter, two well beaten eggs, flour enough to make it a stiff dough; set it to raise and when light mold to high biscuits and set to rise again; place in oven. When done rub tops with granulated sugar and milk and place in oven to dry.

Economical Sponge Cake.

Two eggs, whites and yolks beaten well separately. Mix nearly all of one cup of sugar with the whites, the rest with the yolks; add one cup flour and one heaping teaspoonful baking powder. After mixing all these well together, add one-half cup boiling water, flavor and salt.

Beating Carpets.

Beat the wrong side first and when the carpet is laid down again sponge it all over with warm water to which a little ammonia has been added. This will brighten the colors, and give the carpet a fresh, clean appearance.

PROPERLY MADE PUFF PASTE

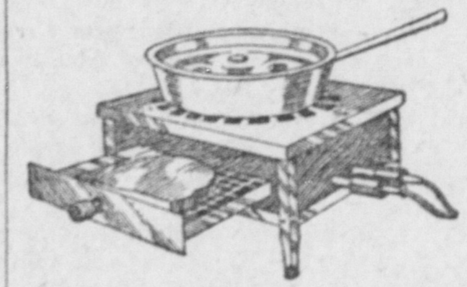
Directions Not Hard to Follow, but Are of the Utmost Importance.

One pound of butter and one pound of flour; wash the butter in ice water, dry and put on ice to cool; sift flour into a cold bowl; pour ice water with juice of half a lemon into flour, enough to make a stiff dough; put your hands in ice water, pat out the butter into an oblong shape; dredge marble or board with a little flour, put on the dough and dredge slightly; roll from you gently with a rolling pin into a square about half an inch thick, put butter in the center, fold over the sides so that they will lap, fold from the top toward you, roll out carefully, fold again, set on ice 25 minutes, then roll out three times, folding as before, keeping the rough ends toward you; fold again, set on ice 25 minutes, then roll out three times, folding as before, keeping the rough ends toward you; fold, set on ice 20 minutes, roll again three times; put on ice 15 minutes and roll again. Do not press heavily with the roller; mix in cool place. Puff paste is nicer rolled on marble; it will keep for a week covered with a damp cloth.

DOES TWO TASKS AT ONCE

Combination Electric Toaster and Cooker Makes It Easy to Prepare Breakfast Quickly.

By the use of a combination electric toaster and cooker, the breakfast eggs or cereals may be cooked on top of the stove, while the toast is browning



In the toaster. One operation does not interfere with the other in any way, as the heating coils are underneath the openings in the top of the stove and above the toaster, which is in the form of a drawer.—Popular Mechanics.

Prune Krichen.

Sift one pint flour with one-quarter teaspoonful salt, two tablespoonfuls sugar, and one and one-half teaspoonfuls baking powder. Rub in two rounding tablespoonfuls of butter and moisten with two-thirds cupful of milk and a beaten egg. Mix together quickly and well and pat out with the hands until about an inch thick. Fit into a square buttered pan and press into the dough a layer of stewed prunes, halved and with the skin side down. Pour over two or three tablespoonfuls melted butter, dust with sugar and a trifle of cinnamon, and bake twenty minutes.

Fish Cakes.

Take about a pound of cold fish, free from skin and bone, and flake it. Add to it two teaspoonfuls of boiled rice, stir in two ounces of dripping, a dessertspoonful of chopped parsley, half a teaspoonful of curry-powder, a beaten egg, and, if necessary, a little milk. Stir over the fire for a few minutes, then spread on a dish to get cold. Make into cakes, brush over with egg, dip in breadcrumbs, and fry a golden brown in hot fat. These are tasty and economical.

Carpets on Floor.

To clean carpet on floor, take four ounces alcohol, one 10-cent cake soap, two ounces borax, shave soap and dissolve in two quarts water boiling hot. Add borax when dissolved, add one gallon of water, boil fifteen minutes, take from fire, and add as much water as necessary. Take good stiff brush and go over one width of the carpet at a time, dipping brush in fluid often, then go over all again with clean water. Your carpet will look like new.

Bran Bread.

Four cupfuls of bran flour, two cupfuls white flour, one-half teaspoonful salt, two rounding teaspoonfuls soda, two eggs beaten light, two cupfuls buttermilk, six tablespoonfuls molasses, one-half package seedless raisins. Mix well with hand and bake in moderate oven one hour. Try with a straw before removing from oven. Bake in a deep bread pan in order to retain moisture. This makes one loaf and is good for constipation.

Vegetable Transformation.

Clean four large carrots, and simmer them for a quarter of an hour. Peel six turnips and twenty button onions; chop them and the carrots all up, and fry in two ounces of butter with a teaspoonful of sugar for five or six minutes. Shake well, and fry again until the whole are covered with a kind of glaze. Pour over them half a pint of white sauce, season with pepper and salt, and serve very hot.

Rice Waffles.

Mix a teaspoon and a half of boiling rice with a pint of milk rubbing it smooth over the fire; take from the fire and add a pint of cold milk and a teaspoon of salt; stir in four well-beaten eggs with enough flour to make a thin batter. Serve hot, baking in waffle irons; powdered sugar with a flavoring of powdered cinnamon makes a pleasing dressing.

STATE NEWS.

Reading.—Attacked by masked highwaymen near the South Mountain asylum, Wernersville, Frank Neff and John Wentzel, employees of Gerhart & Moyer, general merchants, of Robeson, were relieved of \$200 in cash and checks. They covered a country route by team and were returning with their collections. One of the highwaymen grasped the harness of the horses, while the other ordered the occupants to alight. Two drawn revolvers were pointed into the faces of the drivers accompanied by the command to hand over their money or their brains would be blown out. After securing the money, the drivers were compelled to mount the wagon and proceed on their way.

Lewistown.—Alexander Frohm, 29 years old, was instantly killed at the Standard Steel Works, when a sand bucket dangling from the lift chains of a traveling crane struck and crushed his skull like an eggshell. Frohm is the last male member of the family, which has been wiped out by a series of fatalities. The father and one son were killed by different trains, another son drowned in two feet of water. Mrs. Frank Shumaker, a sister, survives.

Chester.—The screams of a baby awakening the family of John Pursley, saved the inmates from perishing by flames. Mrs. Pursley, who was the first to awake, detected the odor of smoke. She aroused her husband, who hastened to the nearest telephone and sent in an alarm. In the meantime the remaining members of the family were awakened and escaped from the burning building in safety.

Reading.—Henry S. Dietrich, aged 45, a prosperous farmer of Albany, committed suicide by shooting himself in the head with a shotgun. He failed to put in his appearance for dinner and an hour later his daughter, Maud, aged 15, heard a noise in the cellar. Upon investigation she found her father in a dying condition. He wrapped himself in four blankets in order to deaden the noise of the gun.

York.—Because they failed to purchase uniforms as required by the by-laws, forty-seven members of the Good Will Fire Company have been expelled from that organization. An amendment was made to the by-laws last November allowing each member six months in which to purchase the regulation fatigue uniform and New York city regulation cap.

Bangor.—One of the most important and largest transactions in the slate industry has just been consummated by the transfer of the holdings of the Lehigh Coal & Navigation Co., in the Old Bangor Slate Company to the Bangor Excelsior Slate Company or "R. S. Brown interests." These interests now own or control about 75 per cent. of the output of the Bangor region.

Catsauqua.—Fire partially destroyed the residence of Colonel James W. Fuller, Jr., causing several thousand dollars' worth of damages. The fire was caused by a defective electric wire in the elevator shaft, which runs from the basement of the residence to the colonel's den on the third floor.

Pittsburg.—R. K. Hissem, the aged president of the Farmers' & Manufacturers' National Bank, at Mt. Pleasant, was acquitted in the United States District Court here of the charge of aiding and abetting Cashier C. E. Mullin in misapplication of the bank's funds. The jury returned the verdict under instructions from Judge Charles P. Orr.

Carlisle.—Carlisle's Ministerial Association has won in its campaign for the Sunday closing of the local postoffice, an order having been received here to close Sundays, excepting for the delivery of special mail. Of the 2,000 cards sent out there were but six dissenting votes and four neutral.

Reading.—The personal assessment of all males over 21 years of age, whether naturalized or not, subject to a poll tax of \$1 a year, has been completed by the city assessors. The figures show a total of 26,975 subject to the tax, an increase of 375 over last year.

Conshohocken.—The application for a charter for the Moose Lodge of this place has been withdrawn. The examiner whom the court appointed to investigate the application, reported adversely, alleging that the sale of liquor in the lodge would be in violation of the liquor laws.

West Chester.—The Corn Growers' Association of Pomona Grange, No. 3, of Chester and Delaware counties, announced a large number of prizes to be awarded at the annual corn show here next December. Prizes will also be given for the products of corn as made up into household articles.

Pittsburg.—Louis Kabrosky, charged with violating the Federal White Slave law, was found guilty in the United States District Court here and was sentenced by Judge Orr to pay a fine of \$500 and serve three years in the Federal prison at Leavenworth, Kans.

Allentown.—William S. Dlicher started divorce proceedings here against Hattie S. Dlicher, alleging she threatened to poison and shoot him, and also declaring she would kill him with a butcher knife. He also says he has had to dodge carbolic acid she threw at him.

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