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MEDALS AND RIBBONS.

DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS
RULINGS.

There are 200,000 war medals of all sorts and degrees to be issued in this Dominion, when they are available. It is going to be a big job, but, presumably, most of them will be issued through the post, for the soldiers are scattered now, and it will not be possible for most to attend special parades (which is the usual procedure) to receive them from the G.O.C. or O.C. district. Victoria Crosses, if there are any now to be distributed, and all honours directly conferred by the King, will, of course, be presented personally by his Excellency the Governor, and the presentation of medals for gallant conduct or meritorious service is made by the Minister of Defence, a General Officer, or, at the discretion of the G.O.C., they may be presented by local authorities, though it is usual for them to be presented at military parades.

Defence Headquarters forwards the following information concerning medals, how to obtain them, and when to wear them, or the ribbons:—

Returned soldiers entitled to medals for gallantry or meritorious service may have them forwarded by registered post on application to the officer-in-charge Base Records. The same procedure may be adopted in the case of the General Service and Victory Medals, when they are ready for issue. It is advisable, however, for soldiers to have them formally presented if they can possibly attend.

Although it is not customary to wear ribbons on civilian costume, there is no reason against doing so, and Defence Headquarters says that ex-soldiers should make it their custom to wear medals when attending public functions in plain clothes since medals or ribbons are the insignia of honourable service rendered to the State.

No relative or parent of a soldier who has lost his life is entitled to wear decorations, medals or the ribbons awarded to the man for service in the field. It is the same with awards made posthumously—the decoration or medal, though handed to a relative, must not be worn.

As a further note it may be mentioned that, in addition to the 1914, or 1914-15 Star issued to those entitled to one or the other, every soldier who entered a theatre of war will be entitled to receive the British General Service Medal and the Allied Victory Medal. These are now being manufactured in England, but since, when they do arrive here, they will require to be engraved, it will be some considerable time before they are available.

Of Interest to Women.

SIMPLIFICATION AND LABOUR
SAVING.

Having made up our minds that there is room for improvement, much needed amendment, in fact, in the domestic word our next task is to consider how that reform can be brought into effect.

The first means are named above: Simplification of living and economy of labour by new appliances and rearrangement. Everyone knows that a great deal of simplification has already taken place in domestic affairs during the past twenty or thirty years. Little girls no longer wear frilled muslin pinafores every day, or any day for that matter; embroidered pantaloons, too, are a thing of the past. And the grandmothers of the rising generation remembering the desperate and despairing dawns in the knees of stockings would rise up wondering at their own stupidity who never thought of three-quarter socks. No longer do we oil our hair—not regularly anyway—and hang starched antimacassars over the chair backs to keep off the oil. No longer do we erect canopies over our beds and enlarge the glass panes of our windows, merely to have the larger area to clean. The starched shirt-front is gone, and the stiffened and glazed cuff and the Georgian cravat. And with the disappearance of every cumbersome and unnecessary fashion, may we not say devoutly, "we are blest that Rome is rid of him!"

But there is much yet to be done in the clearing line. Though we have simplified our clothing until the starched front and boned bodice and frilled pinafore of yesterday would view with disdain and secret envy the soft shirt and waist and belted overall of to-day, we have not carried the reform so far in our furnishings and we have gone little or no distance in the matter with our diet.

People still clutter their houses with a good deal of unnecessary furniture and superfluous ornaments. What dust they must have gathered those multitudinous nick-nacks on the what-nots of the past; and what dust still accumulates on the vases and figures and plaques that encumber the mantelpieces and shelves and tables at the present day! And dust must be dusted, and dusting takes time. The eye needs to be trained to the beauty of sparseness, severity and choice in ornamentation; and the hand will rejoice in a vast of unnecessary labour abolished. Cases or cabinets, too, with doors, for books and china, save labour in comparison with open shelves, by keeping out the dust. The simpler and sparer the furnishing and ornamentation, the greater is the real artistic beauty and the less the labour and time used in keeping the establishment clean. Every one who has read "The Turn of Mind," remembers the dark servant's verdict on the great black-lacquered statue. "She mighty hard to dust! Yes, sah, dus' get in all dem wrinkles." Let's have as few wrinkles as possible.

Then our diet. Here we approach a topic that must be handled tenderly. Interfere between the British worker and his beef, between the housewife and her pickles, and you may rue the day you set out to reform a recalcitrant world. But the fact remains, we eat too much, and two-thirds of many a woman's working day are spent in the preparation of food and the washing of dishes and pots. I have heard a woman, tired to death of cooking, declare she would willingly live on a boiled egg.

If you ask women why they cook so much they almost invariably answer that men require it. "You must give a man meat." Sometimes you "must" give it to him three times a day. And to interfere with the traditional menu, is to advertise yourself a crank.

But the fact remains, and is gradually forcing itself into notice, that we do eat too much, and our eating entails too much cooking.

Diet depends largely on occupation, but we question whether even those who are engaged in active out-door work require three meals of the traditional character and dimensions. They have never known the profound satisfaction of being thoroughly hungry—not just peckish, but really empty—if they have always eaten those three meals.

As for those with lighter physical work, or an indoor life, they are only busy clogging up their body-cells with waste products and poisons when they eat meat two or three times a day and load their digestive organs with successive heavy repasts.

Did not the doctors discover that rationing in England was good for the national health?

And if we were hungrier, we ordinary,

well-fed people, we should require less variety and curiousness in the preparation of food. There is no sauce like a sharp appetite, pickles would be out-of-date—they are bad for the digestion anyhow.

What a to-do there would be if some "autocrat of the breakfast table" could reduce all Invercargill to two slices of toast, one cup of tea, cocoa, hot water, or milk, and in the case of outdoor workers a piece of cheese or one egg, for breakfast. But all Invercargill would be healthier and in the end happier. And how the cost of living would go down! How soon would sausages and chops, and ham, and bacon descend from their loftiness. If cheese and eggs are too dear, take porridge and milk, and let the toast be made of brown bread whatever! Let's think about it and next week consider labour-saving from the other point of view.

Children's Column.

(By "Mater.")

THE BUBBLE FAIRIES.

It was a very hot afternoon, and a little girl was sitting in the garden all by herself. Enid was not lonely, although she had no brothers and sisters to romp with her. On this special afternoon, she was very busy blowing bubbles. This was her favourite game, and she would never tire of watching the beautiful colours as they floated away, and each time, Enid would try and blow a bigger one than the last.

"Oh, how I wish I could blow a bubble as big as myself, and then I could see exactly what is inside!" exclaimed Enid.

Again she blew a bubble into the air, and this time it grew and grew, and became larger and larger, and Enid became more excited, for it was the biggest bubble she had ever seen.

And there in the sun it floated about, revealing its colours, so wonderful. Suddenly, Enid watching it, cried out:

"Why, there are fairies living inside!"

And it was perfectly true. Inside the bubble little figures were dancing and bopping about. "Oh, how beautiful! Can't you come outside and speak to me?" Enid, full of wonder still, peered into the fairy ball, for it had now become as big as herself.

But the fairies gave no answer, but beckoned her to go inside.

"I can never get inside there, it is too delicate for me. I should break it," explained Enid. "You must come out and talk to me." But still the fairies did not speak, but danced up and down in their dainty sphere.

"I know," said Enid, as an idea passed through her head. "They can't get out, and want me to help them; well, the next thing is how do I get inside?"

She walked softly round the bubble to find a way in, but not a door or window could be seen. Enid was feeling quite sad that she was unable to get to the dainty little creatures, who looked so anxious to get out.

"Well, I'm going through. I don't see any other way, and the dear little things are still beckoning to me."

So Enid, her mind made up, closed her eyes and took a deep breath, and plunged towards the bubble. What happened, she doesn't quite remember, but it is a well-known fact that the bubble did burst, and she heard tiny voices singing, and had seen the beautiful colours of their gossamer wings, and their dainty gowns of scarlet and silver, yellow and green.

And then suddenly everything became quite still, and a fairy, more beautiful than all the rest, gaily tripped up to where Enid was sitting, and spoke to her in a sweet voice. "I have come to thank you for giving us our deliverance to-day," began the fairy. "You are the first mortal who has dared to break the spell, which has been cast over us so long."

"Long, long ago, the bad imps of the Forest of Tears, waged war on the good fairies. The imps carried off many prisoners, and imprisoned them in a bubble, and would not let us have our freedom until some mortal child should think for herself, and find some way to release us."

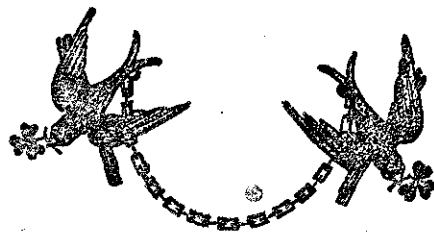
"I am proud to have helped you, and will always remember how I once helped the bubble fairies."

And when Enid grew older, it was always joy for her when a beautiful bubble burst, for she knew of the joy in Fairyland.

The doctor stood at the bedside of the sick man. "Did you administer the sleeping draught at nine o'clock as I directed?" he inquired of the wife. "Yes," she answered with a sniff, "but it seemed a pity to have to wake the poor man out of the first sound sleep he'd had in four days to give it to him."

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The Home.

SOME TOMATO RECIPES.

Tomatoes are delightfully cheap just now, and these dishes will, therefore, be within the reach of everyone. A little stewed tomato or tomato puree is very nice with a poached egg, and a couple of tablespoonsful will greatly improve the flavour of an omelette.

Tomato Rice.—Wash 2oz of rice thoroughly and cook in half a pint of milk until quite soft. Then flavour with salt and pepper. Take one pound of tomato puree, add the rice and beat together until smooth. Stir in 1oz of butter. Serve very hot with or without, grated cheese.

Tomato Pudding.—Take six small tomatoes. Cut them in slices and place in an enamelled saucepan. Add 1oz butter, a teaspoon of chopped parsley, salt, pepper, and a very little cayenne. Pour over it one pint of stock. Boil until quite soft and pass it through a sieve or fine colander. Add 1oz of anchovy essence. Thicken with 1oz butter and 1/2oz flour previously mixed together in another pan with some of the tomato mixture. Stir over the fire until the sauce-thickens, and it is then ready for use.

Steak and Tomato Pudding.—Mix some fine salt with a dust of cayenne, some black pepper, and a little grated nutmeg. Cut about 1 1/2lb of lean steak into moderately small, thin slices, and dust them with the salt. Shred 6oz of good beef suet finely and put into a basin with one of flour, a pinch of salt, and a teaspoonful of baking powder. Rub the suet into water enough to make it a smooth and fairly soft paste. Turn the paste on to a floured board and roll it out to about one-third of an inch in thickness. Then line a pudding basin which has been buttered. Remove the skins from some tomatoes, cut them into quarters, and take out the seeds. Place a layer of meat rolls in the basin and cover them with some pieces of tomato; then scatter a little bacon and onion over them and continue in the same way until the basin is full. Pour in rather less than a pint of stock or water and cover in the pudding with a layer of the paste about 1/2in thick. Trim it neatly and moisten the edge with a little water against the under paste, so that it will adhere. Slip the cloth into boiling water and tie firmly over the basin. Boil for four hours, taking care not to let the water boil over the top of the basin.

Tomato Patties.—These patties are a very palatable substitute for meat. Ingredients: Rather more than a quarter of a pound of bread crumbs, two ounces of beef suet, two large tomatoes, one egg, pepper, salt and a teaspoonful of meat essence and two tablespoonsful of self-raising flour. Skin and chop tomatoes, mix them thoroughly with other ingredients. Form the preparation into round, flat patties and fry them in hot fat a golden brown colour. They are delicious eaten hot.

Tomato Shape.—Put half the contents of a tin of tomatoes into a stewpan with a whole onion, 1 1/2oz of nut margarine, a blade of mace, a little salt, pepper, and a pinch of castor sugar; cover the pan closely, and let the tomatoes simmer for half-an-hour. Then add a pint of water and 2oz sago, and let the latter cook

gently until it is practically dissolved; ascertain that there is sufficient flavouring and rub the whole through a fine sieve into a basin. Rinse a china mould with cold water, and pour in the prepared tomato and leave it until it is sufficiently firm to turn out; serve it surrounded by cooked green peas or haricot beans (from which the skins have been removed), in either case dressed with mayonnaise sauce. The latter sauce should not be considered a luxury by non-meat eaters, as it is rich in dietetic properties and it will therefore add to the food value of the tomato shape.

SUMMER DRINKS.

Barley Water.—Four ounces pearl barley, two quarts of water, the rind and juice of half lemon, sugar if liked. Wash the barley and put into a saucepan with cold water to cover; bring to the boil, and strain. Put the barley into a jug with the thinly-peeled rind of half a lemon; and two quarts of boiling water. Let it stand till cold; add the lemon juice, strain, sweeten to taste, and serve. The barley should be used for a pudding or soup.

Apple Punch.—Do not throw away the apple peelings and cores, but wash and boil them well, adding the thinly-cut rind of a lemon and the strained juice. Sweeten with a little sugar, golden syrup, or honey. Add a few cloves and a little cold tea. Strain it when well boiled and serve very cold.

Ginger Beer.—Boil one pound of sugar and one ounce of powdered ginger, to half-gallon of water. Put one heaped teaspoonful of cream of tartar into a large saucepan. Pour the boiling liquid on to it. Add another half-gallon of water, and when luke-warm put in one teaspoonful of brewer's yeast and the juice of a lemon. Cover and leave for twenty-four hours, and then bottle and keep for a week or so before using.

Iced Coffee.—Make half-pint of very strong black coffee; mix with it one pint of milk and half-pint of cream. Sweeten to taste. Freeze in an ice machine or let the jug stand surrounded by ice, for some hours. If liked, a spoonful of sweetened whipped cream can be served on each glass or cupful of coffee.

Spiced Lemonade.—Make a lemon syrup as follows:—Squeeze the juice from four lemons and chip the rind from one. Add one cupful of sugar, one cupful and a-half of water, three whole cloves, and half a teaspoonful cinnamon. Cook until the sugar is well dissolved and the spices mixed, adding more water if necessary to keep the syrup thin. Cool and use one quarter of a glassful for each one, filling the glasses with very fine chopped ice.

Apple Lemonade.—Cook until tender dried apples, including the skin and core, in enough water to cover. Strain through a jelly bag, add a cupful of sugar to each cupful of juice, bring to a boil, then cool. For each glassful of apple lemonade, use half a cupful of the apple syrup, the juice of half a lemon, and water and ice to fill the glass. Serve with a candied cherry floating on top.

Mint Ice Squeeze the juice of one lemon over a handful of mint leaves, in the bottom of a tall glass. Crush well; add four teaspoonfuls of sugar and sufficient ice and water to fill the glass.