

## QUERIES.

Any queries, domestic or otherwise, will be inserted free of charge. Correspondents replying to queries are requested to give the date of the question they are kind enough to answer, and address their reply to 'The Lady Editor, NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC, Auckland,' and in the top left-hand corner of the envelope 'Answer' or 'Query, as the case may be. The rules for correspondents are few and simple, but readers of the NEW ZEALAND GRAPHIC are requested to comply with them.

Queries and Answers to Queries are always inserted as soon as possible after they are received, though, owing to pressure on this column, it may be a week or two before they appear.—ED.

### RULES.

No. 1.—All communications must be written on one side of the paper only.

No. 2.—All letters (not left by hand) must be prepaid, or they will receive no attention.

No. 3.—The editor cannot undertake to reply except through the columns of this paper.

## ANSWERS TO QUERIES.

VINEGAR ('Sour apple').—What a dreadful *nom-de-plume* you have adopted! It sets my teeth on edge! I feel inclined to tell you to use your own name for vinegar. Do change it. But now for your recipe. Take apples, pears, or any juicy fruit, crush them well; to two bushels of fruit take four gallons of boiling water and pour over the fruit, and put in a warm place for a week. Strain off impurities as they arise. At the end of that time strain it through a strong thick towel, pressing the pulp. Put the juice in a cask or jar; put in a pint of yeast and a bit of bread. Let the jar be quite full. Put the bung in loosely and throw over it a piece of flannel. Set it in a warm place for a month or six weeks, and bottle. A vinegar plant is the cheapest way to get vinegar.

PARSLEY JELLY (Dorothy L.).—Take as much fresh young parsley as your jelly-pan will conveniently hold, and wash it well; then pick it—that is, remove the stalks and any withered leaves. When perfectly clean, put it in the jelly pan and flatten it a little, and then put it in water about one inch less than will cover the parsley, and half a teaspoonful of alum. Put it on the fire and boil for half an hour. Put it through a pointed jelly bag without pressure. Now measure the juice, and to each large breakfast cupful add one pound of sugar. Boil a quarter of an hour, and put in jars for use. Always count the time preserves boil from the time when they are boiling all over.

'Birdie'.—For creamed potatoes, pare and chop the potatoes and put them in a hot spider in which a little butter has been melted. Cover closely, after seasoning with salt and pepper, and cook slowly until they are browned thoroughly, stirring occasionally. Fifteen minutes before serving add half a cupful of milk or cream to each quart of potatoes, stirring frequently until taken up.

'Emilie'.—There are various recipes for potato cakes. Some grate the potato, some boil it, using it either cold or hot. One of the best recipes for a cake is to peel and grate sufficient potatoes to make one cupful; mix it well with two cups of plain flour, one of sugar, and a little flavouring and cut lemon peel, one-and-a-half spoonful of baking-powder, and sufficient milk to make it tolerably moist. Another recipe is made of cold potatoes, very well mashed up so as to be absolutely free from lumps. Add to one cupful of the potatoes half a cup of butter. Break over it one egg and beat well, then add another, beat well, then a third (I always beat them with my hand), then a cup of soft sugar, and a little fruit. Mix—but this should be done before you get your hand in the eggs—half a teaspoonful of carbonate of soda and a whole spoonful of cream of tartar well together, rub thoroughly into one cup of flour, add the flour to the mixed eggs, etc., and bake in a well buttered tin in a moderate oven. If the eggs are not very large a little milk may be necessary.

## RECIPES FOR SCONES, ETC.

POTATO SCONES.—Mix one or two eggs with cold mashed potato, a little salt, pepper, butter and flour. Mix into small rolls and bake three-quarters of an hour on a buttered pan.

OLD VIRGINIA LOAF BREAD.—Boil one large Irish potato until done, peel and wash fine, add a little cold water to soften it, mix into it a teaspoonful of brown sugar, a tablespoonful of lard and three tablespoonfuls of hop yeast. Mix all the ingredients thoroughly, and put the sponge in a close jar, cover and let stand several hours to rise. Sift into the tray three parts of flour, to which add a spoonful of salt, then pour the sponge in, with enough cold water to work into a stiff dough; knead until smooth, and let stand over night to rise. In the morning work in flour to keep from sticking to the hands. Allow it to rise one hour, and bake.

SALLY LUNN.—Mix a quart of flour with a teaspoonful of salt and tablespoonful of sugar, in which rub a tablespoonful of butter and an 11-3 potato, mashed fine; add half a teaspoon of yeast and three well beaten eggs; with warm water to make a soft dough. Knead half an hour. Let rise, handle lightly, put in a cake-mould and bake in a hot oven.

CHOCOLATE CREAMS.—I have much pleasure in giving a recipe for these dainties. Mix two ounces of Bermuda arrowroot slowly with 1½ gills of cold water. Add twelve ounces of pulverised sugar; boil rapidly from eight to ten minutes, stirring continually. Remove from the fire and stir till cool, flavour with vanilla, continue stirring until it creams, then roll into little balls. Melt the chocolate over steam (add no water), and when the cream balls are cold roll them in one by one and lay on a buttered slab to cool. I believe a recipe for chocolate creams has already appeared in the GRAPHIC.

FLAG BRAND SAUCE.—Try it the best in the market. HAYWARD BROS., Christchurch.—ADVT.

## PICKLES.

As many who like to keep their storeroom well plenished, so as to present an attractive appearance to a good house-keeper, are now thinking of pickles, I am giving a few good recipes, and will add more next week.

TOMATO AND ONION PICKLES.—One peck of tomatoes, twenty four onions, quarter of a pound of white mustard seed, four tablespoonfuls of ground ginger, three of mustard, one ounce of whole allspice, half an ounce of cloves, two tablespoonfuls of black pepper and two of sugar. Pare and slice the tomatoes thin, and chop the onions fine. After the tomatoes are sliced, pack them in a jar, putting a thick layer of salt between each layer of tomatoes, cover and let them stand for twenty-four hours; then pour off the liquor, and put the tomatoes, onions and spice into a large kettle in alternate layers. Cover the pickles well with vinegar, put cover on the kettle, and cook gently, for three-quarters of an hour after it has come to a boil; if the pickle seems too thick, add a little more vinegar.

WALNUT PICKLES.—Put tender, young, green walnuts into a jar, pour over them boiling salt water. Let them soak nine days, changing the water every third day. Pour off the brine and pour on vinegar, seasoned with garlic, ginger, mace, horseradish, red pepper and nutmeg.

GREEN TOMATO PICKLES.—Cut in thin slices, then place in a jar in layers, with salt sprinkled between each. Let them stand over night, then pour off all the water which the salt draws out of them. Then place in jars in layers, with a layer of horseradish, mustard seed, cloves, and small red peppers between each. Cover with strong vinegar and keep tightly covered.

SWEET TOMATO PICKLES.—One peck of green tomatoes, sliced, soak in salted water twenty-four hours. Drain off; add two quarts of vinegar, one and a half pounds of sugar, spices of all kinds, and boil the whole one half hour.

## ALL ROUND THE HOUSE.

### USEFUL HINTS.

NEVER, on any consideration, use brass, copper, or bell-metal kettles for pickling; the verdigris produced in them by the vinegar being of a most poisonous nature. Kettles lined with porcelain are the best. When it is necessary to boil vinegar, do so in a stone jar on the fire. Use also wooden spoons and forks. A small lump of alum added to the vinegar in which pickles are sealed renders them crisp and tender, and if covered with cabbage or grape leaves a fresh green colour will be imparted. In making pickles, cider vinegar is best, but very nice, strong vinegar may be made of sorghum, as follows: One pint of sorghum to each gallon of soft water (hard water will do, but soft is best), add a cake of yeast and some good 'mother,' if you have it. Tie a cloth tightly over the jar or keg and place it in the sun. It will be good in three or four weeks. Stir it well every few days. See that pickles are always completely covered with vinegar. It is a good rule to have one third of the jar filled with vinegar and two thirds filled with pickles. Vinegar should only boil five or six minutes. Too much boiling takes away the strength. Pickles will keep best by being bottled, sealed white hot, and set in a cool place. Bits of horse-radish and spices, with a handful of sugar to each gallon of pickles, assist in preserving its strength as well as greatly improving its flavour. Ginger is the most wholesome spice for pickles; cloves are the strongest, then allspice, cinnamon and mace. Mustard seed is also very nice. If pickles are raised and prepared at home in brine, an oak cask should be used, and they should be kept well covered, with plenty of salt at the bottom of the cask. In making brine for pickles, it should be sufficiently strong to bear an egg. A pint of salt to every gallon of water is the usual proportion.

### CHEAP TABLETS.

THOSE housekeepers who deal with grocers who do not send out 'peg boards,' will find it convenient to keep a cheap tablet, or pad, hung in a convenient place upon which to make a note of groceries, or other articles needed, when the need is first discovered; else in making out the list at the last moment, or in giving orders to the grocery-man, small, but essential articles are apt to be forgotten.

A handy article for this, or any temporary memoranda, may be quickly made from unsized envelopes, such as have contained circulars, etc. Place the envelope in the tablet with the addressed side down, cut the ends and open the envelope. You now have a blank, oblong sheet pointed at the upper end, on which is the mutilage. Lay the next one, cut in the same way, upon this; moisten the mutilage on the flap of the first and press the back of the flap of the second upon it. Add as few or as many as you choose, always keeping the blank side uppermost; and in tearing off the leaves after they are filled, tear below the gummed flap, leaving that, so that more may be added at any time.

Many housekeepers find it a help to write out at night a list of the next day's duties. This is a help to memory, and one finds considerable satisfaction in crossing out the items, one after another, as the work is done.

### A USEFUL PRESENT.

AN extremely useful present, to give someone who is very fond of reading, is a book cover. It may be made of a bit of old brocade, lined with silk and its edges outlined with gold braid. It is wisest to choose a piece of brocade that looks as if it might have belonged to one's great grandmamma's brocade petticoat. There are sold book covers, ready made, of undressed kid, lined with silk, having a strap for the paper-knife to go under, and a long ribbon for the book-mark. The woman who is able to use the brush and paint even a little, can put a monogram in one corner of the cover on the outside, and paint a motto or a name on the ribbon book-mark.

LADIES, for Afternoon Tea, use AULSEBROOKE'S Oreo Biscuits and Cakes, a perfect delicacy.—ADVT.)

## LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.

### SMART AUTUMN NOVELTIES.

(SEE FASHION PLATE PAGE 431.)

THE great difficulty dressmakers of any standing in New Zealand experience with their lady customers is in the fact that out here we receive the winter fashions in the beginning of summer, and so on, in a perplexing and irritating round of mixed-up seasons. To be consistent, a law should be passed forbidding the introduction of any fashion plates into New Zealand but those actually appropriate to the season! Thus should we be spared the present painful exhibition of a summer gown of the last English season's material made up in the style of the following winter.

Cottons do not lend themselves to Newmarket bodices. There are plenty of appropriate designs for them in more substantial materials. The very thick, heavy, fur-trimmed costume is now recognised at Home as being better adapted to a sort of Princess style, or to a bodice adhering to its skirt by means of a flat velvet or silk band.

But having had my growl, let me tell you how to make your autumn gowns. The illustration gives a very good idea of the correct styles. For these useful betwixt-and-between frocks, fur, in the North Island at all events, there are many winter (2) days when a heavy dress is quite out of the question, and ladies gladly take from their hanging presses the sensible half-and-half autumn costume, which a cold day has caused them to lay aside for a time. And as jackets are much worn at this season of the year, I will begin with them.

A smart jacket of grey cloth—very becoming to a pretty figure, and there are many in the colony—is the first illustration. It is lined with striped shot silk. The pockets, the front, and the cuffs of the jacket are all braided with grey tubular braid, and outlined with cut steel gimp.

The second design for a jacket is in rather a different style. It is a loose coat of fawn cloth, lined with shrimp-pink sarah. The fronts are cut long, while the back is cut up in the centre. The coat is edged with braid, which forms Austrian knots, at the top of each opening. Similar knots are placed on the cuffs, and both inside and outside the fronts, where they are finished with loops and olivettes to fasten. When the collar is turned down, the front rolls back, and shows the braiding on the inside.

Turning to the important question of gowns, I am glad to give you a delightful idea in the third illustration, the central figure. This is a graceful gown of grey cloth cut, *en princess*, and made to button down the back. The band at the foot of the skirt, as well as the lower part of the bodice, the plastron, and the sleeves are in bronze cloth, braided at the edges on to the grey cloth, with twisted metal braid.

The fourth figure wears a lovely gown in cedar-colour vicuna, braided with a combination of cedar braid and mixed braid. The skirt is slightly draped on the left side, while the square apron is braided up the front, and brought from the right side, just over the centre line of the skirt, so that it hangs quite straight. The bodice is braided on the side, neck, and cuffs, as well as on the sides of the sleeves.

And, lastly, we come to a really useful and charming costume of checked tweed made on the cross, and arranged with a plain gored skirt, made with a pleated back, and a deep hem round the foot, headed by several rows of stitching. The bodice is tight fitting, with a roll collar, and revers, and a double-breasted waistcoat is of reindeer skin, fastened with buttons of smoked mother-of-pearl. The reindeer skin is made up to show the soft side, and will be found exceedingly effective.

These sketches are all taken from first-rate English models, and are therefore a safe guide for stylish ladies out here.

My London correspondent, 'Heloise,' to whom I am indebted for this description, further adds: 'I saw such a ravishing cloak worn by one of *les belles dames*, of purple-faced cloth, with a Watteau pleat of stout purple and velvet down the back, outlined with a dainty design in black braid and gold cord. The sleeves had tufted cuffs trimmed with braid and cord, into which full padded velvet sleeves were gathered. This is quite the latest.'

Another fashionable craze is the loose backed coat. It is hideously ugly, but this month (February) I have seen lots of them. I suppose you will have them by-and-bye. They are made in maitelassé, or in plain or brocade velvet, and hang straight and loose from the shoulders back and front, to about six inches below the hips.

Stripes for spring gowns are worn in Paris, but just at present, strange to say, we Parisians are dressing very differently to the English. I wore my last French gown yesterday and new hat, and was stared at. The hat looks old-fashioned, I admit in London. It goes right off the head like an aureole, and has a little bow of velvet resting on the hair in front of the turned up high brim. At the back there are tips and ribbon bows. This is the very latest style, and forms a marked contrast to the universal English plateau hat—in varying shapes, I'll admit—but still very much *en evidence* everywhere, though relieved from utter monotony by a few toques. I feel sure that next winter they will adopt these aureole hats in England, and they will drift out to you in the sweet by-and-bye.

Contrasts in colours are worn, or two shades of the one colour. In nearly every case this has a happy effect, and is far safer, taken as a general rule for the majority, for *mes amies*, colour blindness is by no means rare, and it is a dreadful affliction—for the sufferer's friends. Such sinners, knowing that two colours, roughly speaking, harmonise, will use them without the slightest regard as to the special tints, which, of course, makes all the difference. Grey is a colour tolerably easy of treatment, though the blue greys are a snare to some. A pretty dress of this style was composed of cloth of silver grey and silk poplin of a darker shade, the vest, under sleeves, and the border of the skirt being of the poplin.

A lovely evening gown was made of black silk with the pannelled skirt bordered with an appliqué of velvet, most beautifully embroidered in gold, and revealing at one side a petticoat of gold coloured satin, draped with fine black lace. The bodice of this was particularly pretty, being edged round the top with shaped bands of the gold embroidered velvet, and having a few folds of yellow chiffon to form an inner sash.

FLAG BRAND PICKLES.—Ask for them, the best in the market. HAYWARD BROS., Christchurch.—ADVT.)