

Domestic

By Maureen

PLEASANT DRINKS.

Ginger Wine Essence.—2 drams of essence of cayenne, 3 ditto of essence of ginger, ½ burnt sugar, 1oz citric acid, 2 quarts boiling water, 3lb lump sugar. Put the sugar and other ingredients into a pan and pour the boiling water over. When cold, bottle. For use, to half a wineglass of the essence fill up with hot or cold water, according to taste.

Lemonade.—Wash three lemons. Rub well over with lump sugar to extract the oil in the skin. This gives a specially rich flavor not obtained by peeling. Squeeze the juice and pour one quart boiling water over, adding sugar to taste. Do not put in any pips or white skin, as that makes it bitter.

Barley Water.—½lb pearl barley, 12 pieces lump sugar, the juice of 4 lemons. Thoroughly wash the barley, then put in pan with the required quantity of water. Add sugar if desired and lemon, boil slowly until cooked. Then strain. Sufficient for six quarts.

Boiling Milk.

To boil milk without fear of burning, put two or three tablespoonsful of water in the saucepan; let it boil rapidly for two or three minutes. Add the milk, and it will not burn, however fierce the fire may be.

Lemon Snow.

Whip the whites of five eggs to a very stiff froth. Strain the juice of three large lemons, make a pint of blanc-mange with good corn-flour, but sweeten it double as much as for an ordinary way. Stir until nearly cold, then add the whisked whites of eggs and lemon juice. Beat until nearly or quite cold. Pour into a mould which has been rinsed with cold water, and leave to set. Then make a custard with some of the yolk of eggs, and serve poured round the mould. Decorate with stewed plums or prunes.

Worth Remembering.

In using large recipes the following equivalents may be useful:—Two cupsful butter make one pound, two cupsful of granulated sugar make one pound, four cupsful of flour make one pound, four tablespoonsful of flour make one ounce, two 2-3rd cupsful of brown sugar make one pound, four cupsful of liquid in a quart.

Your Piano in Winter.

During the warm, fine days of summer a piano suffers comparatively little—at least, only to an extent detectable by an expert. In the winter, however, it soon goes out of tune.

Damp is the piano's greatest enemy, because it renders the action ineffective, either by preventing the hammers from responding promptly to the touch on the keys, or by causing them to fail to release when the fingers leave the keys. As the mechanism which assists this action consists of a piece of leather or felt elevated on a vertical wire connected with the back of the key, it is important that it should be kept free from moisture.

An old-fashioned remedy—a lazy one—is to take out the piano-action and place it in front of a fire for a few days. This, however, is inadvisable because it only makes the instrument more susceptible to moisture, and thus upsets the tuning, as well as, in some cases, injuring the polished woodwork.

A much better method is to place a small linen bag containing unslaked lime inside the piano, at each end. This will absorb any existing moisture. It should be renewed from time to time.

The piano should always be closed—particularly on wet and foggy days—when not in use, or when there is no fire in the room. If possible, avoid placing a piano in a room which faces north, and if it stands in a room which is only heated occasionally the top and fall (keyboard) should be opened when there is a fire.

In a damp room a useful precaution is to raise the piano from the floor by means of insulators. This allows plenty of air to get beneath it and helps to keep it dry.

Another source of piano trouble is the habit of decorating it by placing plants or even flowers on the top. The moisture from these is often sufficient to put the working of the action out of order. If after the above precautions have been taken the touch is still heavy, expert advice should be obtained.

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