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Farm and home—cake making hints

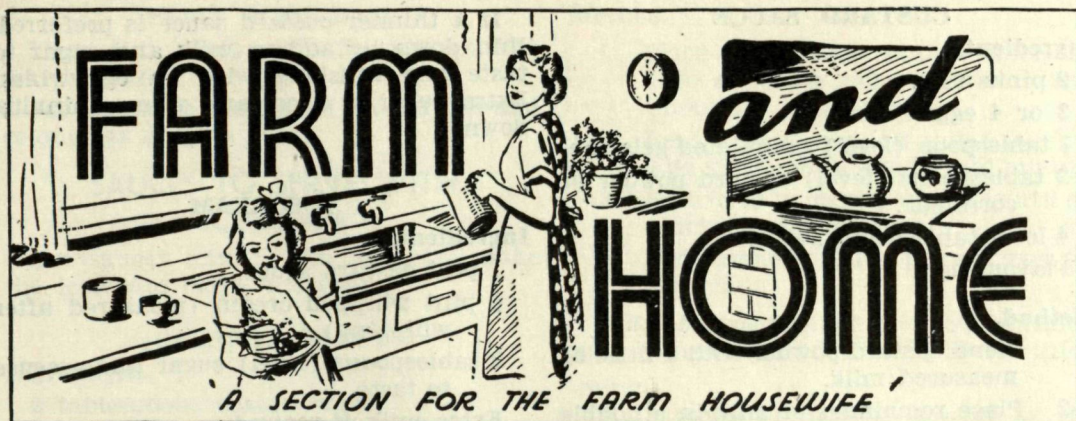
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Suggestions for the Christmas Sweet Course

By HELEN. M. GLOSTER

THE manner in which Australians celebrate Christmas is perhaps one of the outstanding examples of our loyalty to the Mother Country. The traditional Christmas dinner of roast turkey, plum pudding, mince pies, and similar rich and satisfying fare, obviously originated in a cold country, yet most of us sit down a such a meal at a time when the mercury is teetering around the century mark.

Because the original settlers in Australia were almost entirely of British stock we continue to follow the traditional British customs at Yule-tide, and consequently it is with some diffidence that I suggest even a slight change of pattern.

Sentimental associations are hard to break, but it cannot be denied that the cooking of traditional meals is an ordeal for many housewives. Often the delightful Christmas dinner has to be prepared in a kitchen where the temperature is many degrees higher than the Australian summer temperatures outside, and, as a result, those responsible for preparing the meal are frequently so fatigued by the heat and bustle of the morning that they derive but little enjoyment from the Christmas fare. The meal itself, though often a triumph of the culinary art is not one that is suited to a hot climate and the rich food often has the effect of adding to the consumers' discomfort by generating more bodily heat.

Let us have our Christmas dinner by all means, and let it be one to delight an epicure, but why not adjust the menu to make it more suitable for a hot summer's day?

Last Christmas, I made suggestions for introducing a little variety into the poultry course. This year I propose to offer some suggestions which may make the sweet course more interesting.

Although I shall include some of the traditional dishes I shall describe some cold sweets which may be prepared on the previous day and placed in the refrigerator until needed. Such dishes are particularly acceptable during hot weather, and in addition this type of pudding lightens the labour for the housewife on the morning of Christmas Day.

Now that most people have refrigerators, a variety of cold sweets may be served with little extra trouble and such light dishes served really cold are a delightful addition to the Christmas dinner.

Bolled custard is often used as a base for, or an accompaniment to, many attractive sweet dishes. A rich custard sauce makes an excellent foundation for these and the recipe given here has gelatine added. This helps to make the custard light and frothy when whisked with a rotary beater. The mixture may also be used as a foundation for icecream.

CUSTARD SAUCE

Ingredients.

- 2 pints milk.
- 3 or 4 eggs.
- 1 tablespoon (level) granulated gelatine.
- 2 tablespoons (level) custard powder or cornflour.
- 4 level tablespoons sugar.
- Flavouring.

Method.

1. Blend custard powder with a little of measured milk.
2. Place remainder of milk in a double saucepan with water beneath, bring to the boil.
3. Stir hot milk into blended custard powder, return to saucepan, stir until mixture thickens (about 5 minutes).
4. Beat eggs and sugar well, add to mixture in double saucepan.
5. Continue cooking three or four minutes stirring constantly, then add dissolved gelatine.
6. Cool quickly by replacing water in double saucepan with cold water.
7. Beat well when cold, flavour to taste.

This makes a very thick sauce when cold. Thin down with milk if desired.

N.B.—Only pure essences should be used. The imitation mixtures spoil the flavour.

Method 2.

1. Make as above, using yolks of eggs and half the sugar.
2. Whisk whites of eggs until stiff then gradually add sugar.
3. Fold egg white into the custard.

Sauce will keep well in refrigerator for days until required. Beat again before using.

Uses of Custard Sauce

1. As an accompaniment to cold stewed fruit, tinned or bottled fruit.
2. As a base for banana custard.
3. As an accompaniment to pies, tarts, jellies.
4. Poured while hot, over stale sponge cake and allowed to set. Cake may be spread with raspberry or apricot jam first. This sweet is particularly appetising if sauce is made by Method 2.
5. Trifles.

If a thinner custard sauce is preferred, thin down by adding milk and sugar to taste and whisking with an egg whisk. Extra sugar is necessary when thinning down.

ICECREAM

Ingredients.

- 1 pint custard sauce.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pint whipped cream (measured after whipping).
- 2 tablespoons (level) sugar and essence to taste.
- Extra milk if required.

Method.

1. Chill ingredients (sauce, cream, milk).
2. Whip sauce with sugar and flavouring.
3. Whip cream until thick. Be careful to stop **before** it turns to butter.
4. Add cream to sauce and whip until well mixed and light. Icecream should not be too thick.
5. Freeze.

N.B.—The quantity of cream may be varied considerably according to the supply that is available. The more cream that is added, the richer the mixture and the finer the texture.

If fresh cream is not available a small tin of cream added to half a pint of custard sauce will make a good icecream.

To Serve Icecream

Icecream is a suitable accompaniment to many hot and all cold sweets.

It may also be served on its own or with a well-flavoured hot or cold sauce.

To Serve.

Chill a glass bowl or dish, heap the icecream in, piling up well.

Icecream may be decorated with glace cherries, strawberries, chopped almonds or similar decorations.

If preferred, icecream may be brought to the table in individual dishes.

Do not forget a wafer with each serving portion. Wafers may be used as decoration too.

PLAIN ICECREAM

There is no limit to the flavourings that may be used.

For variety, a number of flavourings and colourings may be used.

SAUCES TO SERVE WITH ICECREAM

Hot sauces served with icecream make the icecream more interesting.

CARAMEL SAUCE

Ingredients.

- 2 tablespoons castor sugar.
- 2 tablespoons water.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pint thin custard sauce.
- Vanilla.

Method.

1. Put castor sugar in saucepan and melt until a nice brown colour, stirring all the time.
2. Add one or two tablespoons water, mix until smooth.
3. Add to custard sauce, serve hot or cold.

CHERRY SAUCE

Ingredients.

- 1 oz. glace cherries.
- 2 oz. sugar.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water.
- Juice $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon.
- 2 or 3 drops cochineal.
- 1 teaspoon brandy or sherry.

Method.

1. Put sugar, water and strained lemon juice in saucepan, simmer gently for ten minutes.
2. Cut cherries in small pieces.
3. Add cherries and brandy to sauce, add cochineal to make a cherry colour.
4. Cook for several minutes then turn into a basin to cool.
5. Serve cold.

CHOCOLATE SAUCE

Ingredients.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk.
- 1 oz. dark chocolate.
- 1 teaspoon sugar.
- 1 yolk egg.
- Flavouring.

Method.

1. Place milk and grated chocolate into a double saucepan, heat until chocolate is dissolved.
2. Beat yolk of egg and sugar together and stir chocolate milk into mixture.
3. Return to saucepan and stir until egg thickens the mixture.
4. Add essence. Serve poured over the icecream.

N.B.—A teaspoon of blended cornflour may be used instead of egg yolk for thickening.

A teaspoon of brandy, liqueur or rum may be added to the sauce if desired.

COFFEE SAUCE

Ingredients.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ Cup black coffee.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk.
- 2 egg yolks.
- Level tablespoon sugar.
- Vanilla.

Method.

1. Beat eggs and sugar together.
2. Heat coffee and milk, stir into egg yolks, then cook in a double saucepan until mixture thickens.
3. Strain if necessary, serve hot or cold. A little brandy may be added if desired.

FRUIT SYRUP SAUCE

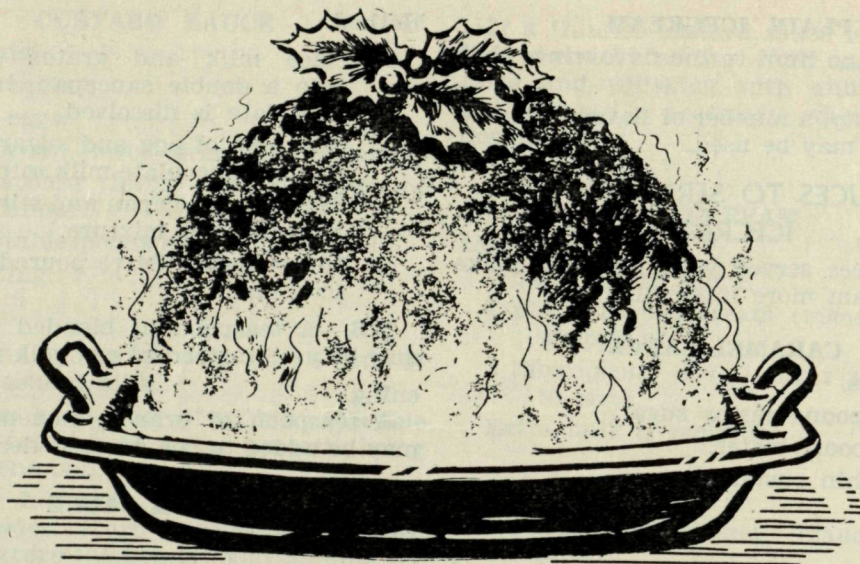
Ingredients.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of syrup from tinned pineapple or other tinned fruit.
- 1 teaspoon arrowroot or cornflour.
- Flavouring.
- Colouring.

Method.

1. Mix arrowroot to a paste with a little fruit syrup.
2. Heat remainder of liquid and stir into blended arrowroot.
3. Stir over fire until it boils.
4. Add sugar to taste.
5. Colour according to type of fruit or syrup.

A little sherry may be added.
We now come to traditional fare.



King George I's Plum Pudding

THIS pudding is reputed to have been eaten by King George I at 6 p.m. on December 25, 1714, his first Christmas in England. A similar recipe was used at Sandringham when puddings were being prepared for his descendants. The puddings were mixed in huge earthen-ware bowls. It is understood that this recipe is no longer used at Sandringham.

Ingredients.

- 1½ lb. finely chopped suet.
- 1 lb. eggs (weighed in the shell.
- 1 lb. dried plums.
- 1 lb. mixed peel.
- 1 lb. raisins.
- 1 lb. sultanas.
- 1 lb. currants.
- 1 lb. flour.
- 1 lb. sugar.
- 1 lb. brown breadcrumbs.
- 1 heaped teaspoon mixed spice.
- ½ nutmeg grated.
- 2 teaspoons salt.
- ½ pint new milk.
- Juice of one lemon.
- 1 large wineglass brandy.

Method.

1. Stone and halve the plums, cut, peel into long strips.
2. Mix dry ingredients.
3. Moisten with eggs beaten to a froth, and milk, lemon juice and brandy.

4. Stand at least 12 hours in a cool place, then turn into greased moulds.
5. Boil for eight hours.
6. Boil a further two hours before serving.

This recipe will make three puddings of three pounds each.

SAUCES TO SERVE WITH PLUM PUDDING

The most interesting pudding is a mixture of 'hot and cold,' hot pudding, icy cold sauce or cold sweet served with a hot sauce.

These are recommended as accompaniments for Christmas pudding.

HARD SAUCE

Ingredients.

- 2 oz. fresh butter.
- 2 oz. icing sugar } or all castor or
- 2 oz. castor sugar } all icing sugar
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla.
- 1 dessertspoon brandy, whisky or sherry.

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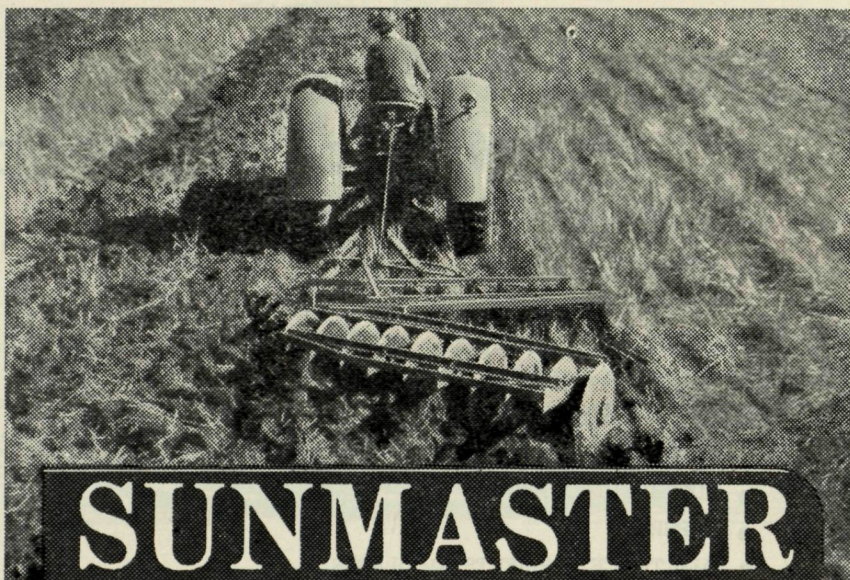
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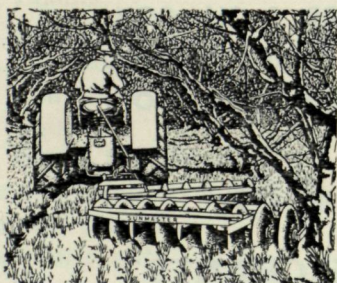
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Method.

1. Beat butter until creamy.
2. Sieve the sugar, add to butter and beat again until very white and frothy.
3. Flavour with vanilla and brandy or other flavouring if desired.
4. Place on ice or in refrigerator to harden.
5. Pile high in a fancy glass dish, sprinkle with nutmeg.

N.B.—A stiffly beaten white of egg may be added to the mixture before chilling. The success of this sauce depends on thorough beating until light and frothy. Serve cold with hot plum pudding or other steamed fruit pudding.

GERMAN SAUCE

Ingredients.

- 2 egg yolks.
- 1 dessertspoon sugar.
- 1 wineglass cooking sherry.

Method.

1. Put all ingredients into a double saucepan with just simmering water in the lower saucepan.
2. Whisk ingredients with a wire whisk until moisture is thick and frothy.
3. Serve at once.
4. Do not over heat or over cook the sauce or it will curdle.

N.B.—This sauce does not take long to cook.

If ingredients are left ready in saucepan sauce may be cooked while a second person is dishing up the plum pudding.

Serve in a sauce tureen or jug with hot plum pudding.

TO SERVE PLUM PUDDING

Place pudding in the middle of a large china dish. Dish should be well heated and thoroughly dry.

Place a sprig of holly on top of pudding.

Pour a wineglass of brandy or whisky around the base of the pudding. Set it alight as you take the pudding to the table.

Be sure to serve Christmas pudding at the dinner table in the traditional manner.

MINCE PIES

Ingredients.

- 12 oz. flaky pastry (made with 12oz. flour).

Mincemeat.

Method.

1. Make pastry.
2. Roll pastry about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick, cut covers for pies, using about two thirds of mixture.
3. Roll remainder of pastry to half the thickness, cut out rounds and line small patty tins.
4. Put in some mince meat, cover with pastry, brush lightly with milk or beaten egg white, dredge with castor sugar. Prick the top.
5. Bake in a hot oven until well browned, then a cooler part of oven until cooked through. Sprinkle again with sugar.

Time to cook, about 20 minutes.

MINCEMEAT—1

Ingredients.

- 1 lb. seeded raisins.
- 1 lb. sultanas.
- 1 lb. currants.
- 1 lb. castor sugar.
- 1 lb. beef suet.
- Grated rind 2 lemons.
- 2 lb. cooking apples (weighed after peeling).
- $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. mixed peel.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. raspberry jam.
- Juice of 3 lemons.
- 1 nutmeg (grated).
- $\frac{1}{2}$ wineglass brandy or whisky.

Method.

1. Mince finely, fruit, suet, apples and peel.
2. Stir in sugar, lemon rind, juice, nutmeg, jam.
3. Add a little brandy or whisky.
4. Mix well, put in jars and cover closely.

N.B.—A few currants may be left whole and stirred into the mincemeat.

MINCEMEAT—2

Ingredients.

- 4 lb. plums (dried).
- 2 lemons.
- 1 teacup water.
- 8 large cooking apples.
- 4 oz. currants.
- 4 oz. raisins.
- 4 oz. sultanas.
- 4 oz. peel.
- 4 oz. sweet almonds.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. ground ginger.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. cinnamon or ground cloves.
- 1 lb. sugar.

Method.

1. Prepare the plums, put them into a saucepan with lemon juice and water. Simmer till tender, then pass through a sieve.
2. Peel, core and chop apples.
3. Mince dried fruit, nuts and peel.
4. Stir all ingredients well with plum pulp.
5. Put into jars and seal.

MINCEMEAT—3

Ingredients.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. suet.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. stoned raisins.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sultanas.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. currants.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. figs (dried).
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. apples.
- 1 lb. sugar.
- 2 tablespoons marmalade.
- 9 oz. mixed peel.
- 6 oz. almonds.
- 1 dessertspoon mixed spices.
- Rind and juice of 2 lemons.
- 2 wineglasses brandy or whisky.
- 1 wineglass rum.

Method.

1. Prepare fruit by washing and drying. Seed raisins, blanch almonds.
2. Peel and core apples.
3. Mince together all fruit, peel, nuts and suet.
4. Add spice, grated lemon rind, lemon juice, marmalade, rum and brandy. Mix well.
5. Cover and stand in a cool place for 24 hours.
6. Mix again and pack firmly into jars. Tie waxed or cellophane paper over the top, and keep in a cool place some weeks before using. This mince-meat should keep 12 months. If it gets too dry a little more wine or spirit may be added.

Shoe Bags for Holidays

HOLIDAYS are approaching for most of us and soon we will be packing our cases and heading for the sea-side or other chosen resorts. These shoe-packing bags are simple to make and quickly finished, and you will find it a boon when travelling to have a separate bag for each pair of shoes and slippers. You will find you no longer have untidy paper shoe parcels and your shoes will never leave a mark on clothing when packed inside a bag.

If you want to do the job properly, have the bags in different colours, preferably the colour of the shoes, so that you know without looking inside, the shoes that you will find within.

Another idea is to put a distinguishing mark or colour patch on each bag. This saves a great deal of time when looking for shoes.

The material used for the bags shown in the photograph, was green headcloth, but

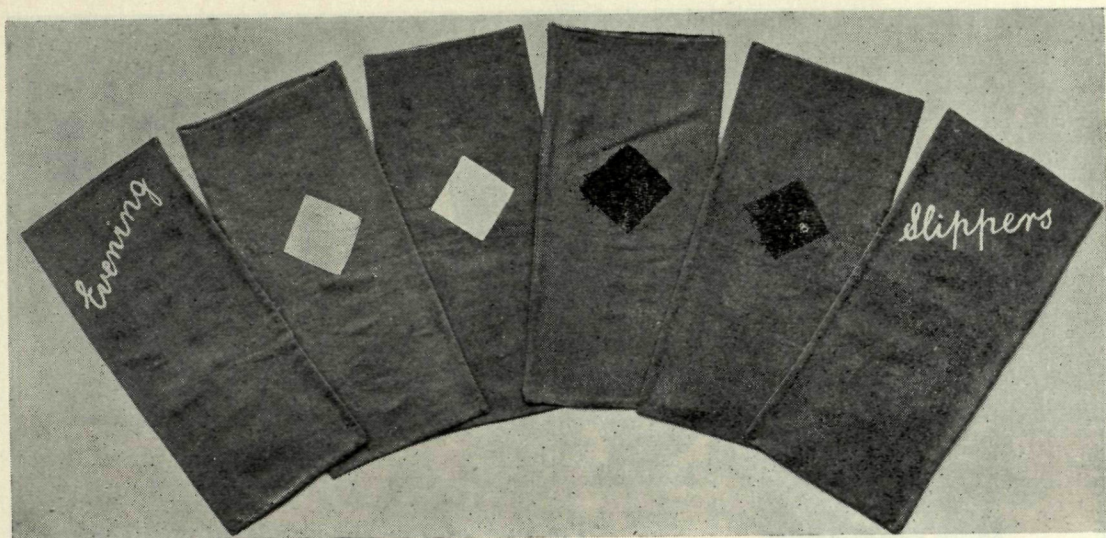
any thick, strong washing material will do. You may have suitable pieces left over from home dress-making.

A quarter of a yard of 36in. material will make one bag.

Fold the material in two, selvages together at one end.

Join the two sides with french seams.

As selvages are at the open end, these may be left as they are.



This set of shoe bags will simplify your holiday packing. Patches of black, white, tan or grey may be used to indicate the colours of the shoes in the bags

If desired, the open end may be hemmed and a draw-string run through.

I have found this unnecessary, although it would be a convenience to hang bags in cabin on a sea voyage. Men's shoe bags should be made a little wider (10 to 12 inches).

These bags make ideal parting gifts for friends going away for big trips.

CAKE MAKING HINTS

WHEN making cakes with margarine or other substitute fats try these additions.

A few drops of lemon juice with the fat helps to remove distinctive flavours noticeable in many substitute fats.

A few drops of glycerine added to the fat improves the texture of the cake and helps to keep it soft and moist.

When making cakes by the creaming method, try separating the yolks from the whites of eggs. Yolks are added one at a

time and beaten into the creamed fat and sugar. Egg whites should be stiffly beaten and folded into the mixture when adding the flour.

You will find this method takes less time than the method by which whole eggs are added. The result should be a lighter cake.

Egg whites may also be beaten separately and added at the last when making a sponge.

DRY CLEANING

Have you ever tried this?

"Lighter fluid" capsules are readily procurable, in small packets containing six capsules and priced at 1s.

Primarily intended as refills for cigarette-lighters these capsules are handy when travelling.

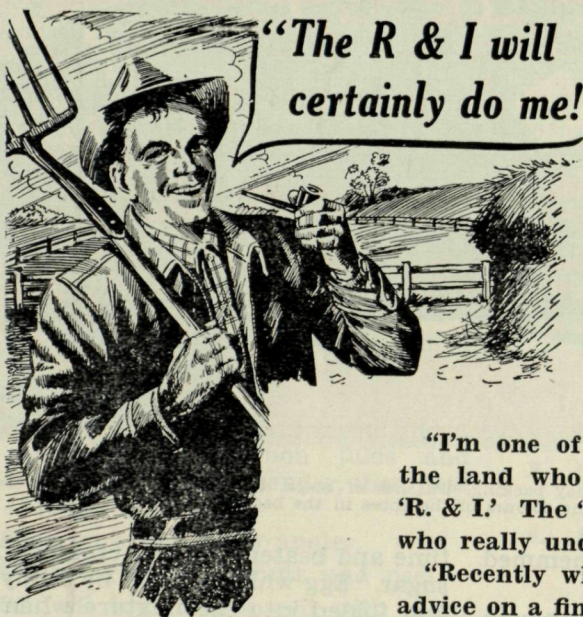
By piercing one end of a capsule with a pin the fluid may be used for removing an untidy grease-spot from coat or frock.

FIRE RISK WARNING

Excellent late pasture growth resulting from the widespread rains last October will increase the bushfire hazard with the advent of continued hot weather.

This has been emphasised recently by the Deputy-Director of Meteorological Services (Mr. G. W. Mackey), who points out that many paddocks now carrying heavy stands of feed will be highly inflammable once the growth has dried out.

Farmers are urged to take the fullest possible precautions to avoid disastrous bushfires. Farm fire-fighting equipment should be overhauled and kept in a high state of efficiency ready for immediate use. Firebreaks should be kept free from inflammable material and widened where possible.



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