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Housekeeper's Chat

Tuesday, April 17, 1928

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Campaigning Against Dangerous Summer Pests." Program also contains suggestions on summer dresses.

Bulletins available: "Clothes Moths and Their Control," "The Housefly," "Bedbugs," and "Housecleaning Made Easier."

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Today's Chat is divided into three parts; I'll read you a letter; then I'll talk about new summer dresses; and thirdly, I'll answer questions, about dangerous summer pests.

The letter comes from a listener in the East, who is evidently as much interested in old recipes as I am. This is her letter.

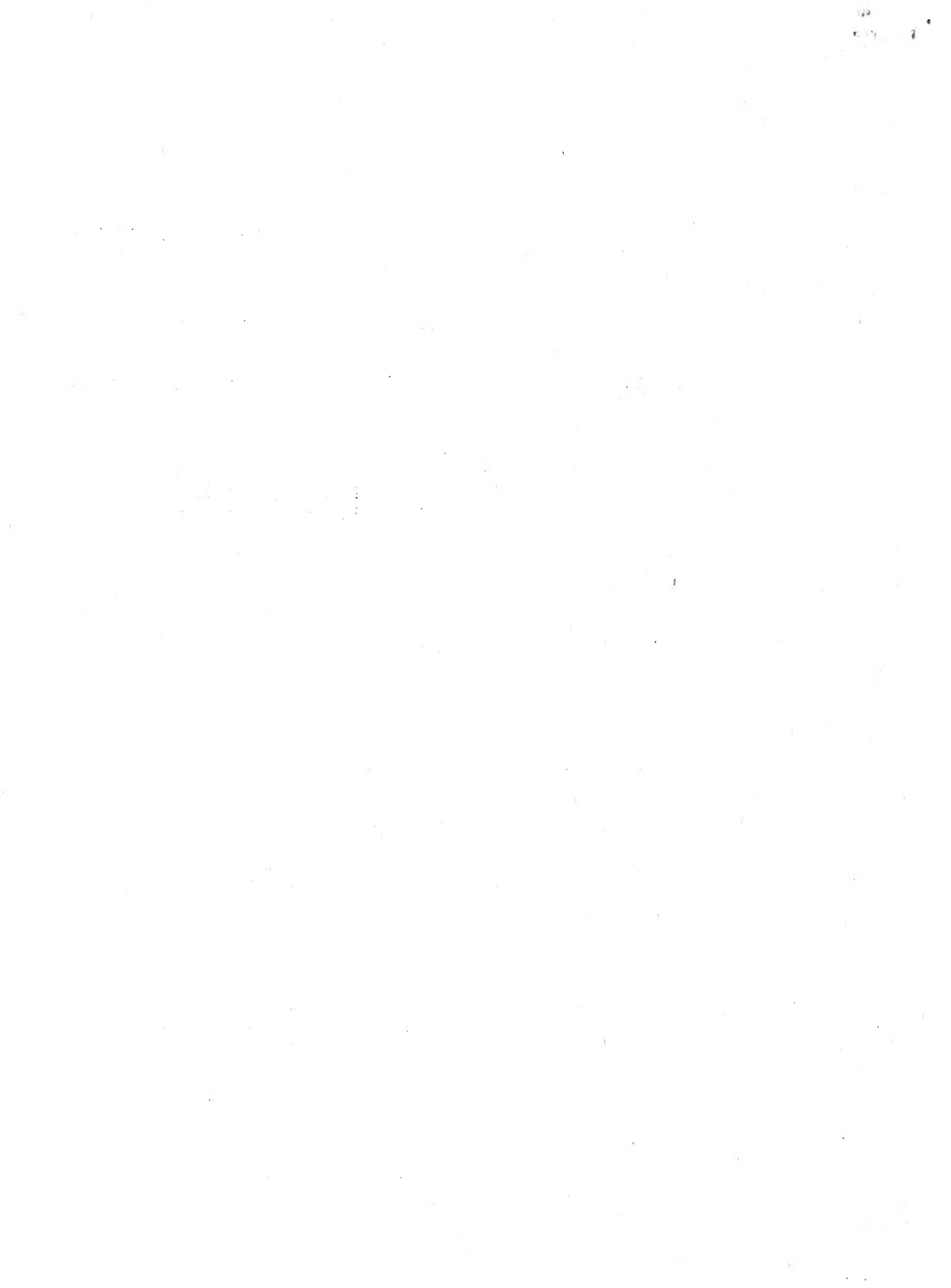
"Dear Aunt Sammy: As I was perusing an old English cookbook of 1778, I came across this recipe for whipped cream. Thought it might interest you, so I copied it as well as I could, with the baby bumping into my arm every other minute."

This is the recipe. If you're inclined to laugh, remember it's one hundred and fifty years old, and should be treated with the respect due such an ancient recipe:

"To make Snow. Take some Cream, and sweeten it to your taste; then tie a Branch of Rosemary, and two or three Birch Twigs together, and whip your cream well with it, still taking off the Froth as it rises; do so till you have made all your Cream into Froth, and lay it high, like a Mountain; but it will look and taste better, if you lay at the Bottom of the Dish you Serve it in, a little Plate of Silver made full of Holes, and those stuck with long stalks of Borage, with the Flowers on."

That's all of the recipe. There's something rather fascinating about it. Perhaps it's because the cream was whipped with "a branch of rosemary, and two or three birch twigs together", instead of with an unromantic egg beater. I fancy it looked pretty, too, with the stalks and flowers of borage peeping out through the whipped cream, piled high, "like a mountain". Borage, by the way, is a rough stemmed plant, with small blue or purple flowers. The leaves are sometimes used in salads.

The next letter is from a housewife who wants to know whether printed



H.C. 4/17/28

cotton broadcloth will be worn this summer. Indeed it will; printed cotton broadcloth is one of the most popular of wash fabrics this season. And doesn't it come in attractive patterns-- some of the designs are printed in small or medium floral motifs; others have dots of various kinds, either as the chief pattern or scattered among flower figures; and the newest offerings have stripes. Then there are a few plain plaid patterns, and a few plaid backgrounds, with tiny flower designs running over them.

Cotton broadcloth is popular because it has so many uses. It has a firm, plain weave, and a smooth finish, making it especially serviceable for sports or house wear. Cotton broadcloth is practical for street dresses in warm weather, because it sheds dirt and dust, and does not wrinkle easily. Broadcloth in plain colors has long been found serviceable for children's bloomer dresses, men's shirts, pajamas, and other garments that must stand frequent laundering. The new printed broadcloths are equally satisfactory for all these uses.

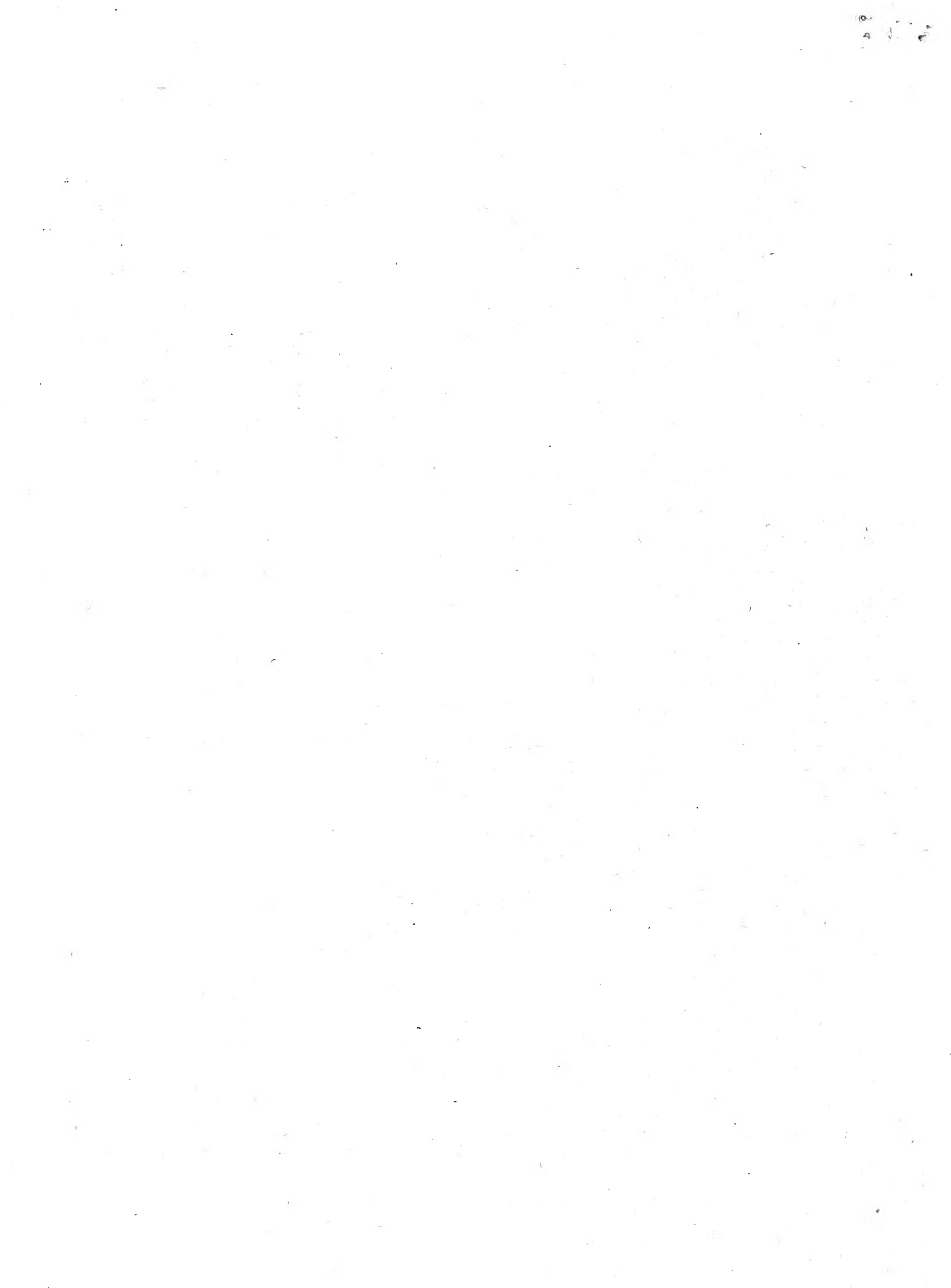
The woman inclined to be stout will prefer the striped broadcloth to the all-over patterns, since up-and down lines tend to reduce her apparent width. The striped printed broadcloth will fit her needs admirably, providing the stripes are not too broad, or too conspicuous in color. Don't you think there's something cool and trim about a one-piece morning dress. Especially if it's made of a smooth finished material, in a pattern of small stripes, of a pleasing color, say green and white, or blue and white. Stripes are also good on the short woman who wants to increase her apparent height. Even the very tall slim woman can wear stripes, if part of the material is used to make horizontal decorative bands, or if the blouse is made one way of the material, and the skirt the other.

Regretfully I turn from the subject of summer dresses to that of summer insects, but it must be done.

First question: "Please tell me whether leaves of red cedar, dried and placed in clothing will kill moths."

The answer is: Leaves of red cedar will not kill moths. Neither will tobacco powder, lavender flowers, cayenne pepper, allspice, powdered sulphur, salt, and all the other old-fashioned so-called remedies for moths.

However, there are substances on the market that give off fumes, which, tightly confined, will kill all stages of the moth--old moth, young moth, caterpillar, and eggs. I shall give you the names of two of these moth destroyers, and you may take your choice. The first is naph-tha-lene flakes--n-a-p-h-t-h-a-l-e-n-e--naph-tha-lene flakes; the second is para-di-chloro-ben-zene crystals. That's such a long word, I'd better spell it: p-a-r-a-d-i-c-h-l-o-r-o-b-e-n-z-e-n-e. It is not enough to scatter these substances on shelves, or in bureau drawers. They must be packed in tight boxes, or bundles, with the garments they are to protect. If you want more advice on storing clothes, and protecting them from moths, I'll be glad to send you a copy of a free bulletin called "Clothes Moths and Their Control."



R-H.C. 4/17/28

Next question: "Is it true that the common housefly can carry typhoid germs?"

Answer: It is true. The common housefly is essentially a breeder in filth. It breeds in, and feeds upon, all sorts of animal and vegetable waste. When it crawls over infected material, it readily becomes loaded with germs, which it may transfer to food. When the housefly comes in contact with material containing typhoid germs, it picks them up on its hairy feet, and may carry them to the food in our kitchens. If the food is not cooked afterward, it may produce typhoid. In this same way, other intestinal germ diseases, such as Asiatic cholera, dysentery, and infantile diarrhea, are carried. There is also strong circumstantial evidence that other dread diseases are carried by flies. When we realize that flies frequent and feed upon the most filthy substances, we can readily see the necessity and importance of controlling this pest.

The most logical method of getting rid of flies is the elimination or treatment of all breeding places, such as stable manure. But, since we do not have a perfect system of destroying all breeding places, it is often necessary to use fly papers, and poisons, flytraps, and insect screens.

Insect screens for doors and windows should be well made, and must fit tightly, otherwise they will not keep insects out. It is equally important that they be made of good durable screen cloth. Insect screen cloth made of copper, although a little higher in price, will prove more economical in the long run, as it lasts many years. Screen cloth made of steel, either painted or metal coated, is often used. Painted steel screen cloth will last one or more years without repainting, depending upon the dampness of the climate.

If you are buying new screens this year, ask for the screen which is made with 16 meshes to the square inch. This keeps out most mosquitoes and other small insects, as well as flies.

Last question: "Please tell me how to get rid of bedbugs."

Answer: Force kerosene, gasoline, or benzine into the cracks and crevices of the bedstead, and along the mouldings and baseboards of the room. Do this every three or four days, for 10 days or two weeks, to kill any bugs hatched in the meantime. As I have said before, even though you are positive there is not a bedbug in the house, it is wise to look over all the beds frequently, in the summer time, because these embarrassing pests can arrive quite unannounced, in a laundry basket, in a trunk, or in a suitcase.

There are a number of valuable free bulletins in the Department of Agriculture which tell how to get rid of Moths, Houseflies, Bedbugs, etc.

Farmers' Bulletin 1180, called "Housecleaning Made Easier", is especially helpful, because it contains, in brief form, how to combat all sorts of household pests.

