

Economy of Labor, — in the Kitchen.

— by —

Florence R. Corbett.

Table of Contents.

	Page.
Why Save Labor in the Kitchen?	
Influence Radiating from the Kitchen.	1
Influence of the Kitchen on the Cook,	3.
Means to Labor-saving.	
Description of the Kitchen,	4.
Description of Articles in the Kitchen.	7.
(Recent Inventions.)	
Care of Kitchen Appliances,	10.
Saving Steps,	11.
Value of Results Obtained,	12-13.

In these days we read that the whole civilized world is going "crazy" over cooking and things pertaining to the Kitchen; and we find those everywhere who protest against this apparent extreme to which we have gone, as much as they condemned the other extreme not long past, in which comparatively no thought was given to the Kitchen.

And so many writers declare that this "Revival of Learning" in the Kitchen portends the advent of a race of gluttons, who will sacrifice health, intelligence, everything, to the satisfaction of the palate. Such writers cannot be good thinkers. They certainly assume that the influence for good in the Kitchen, extends only to the Kitchen-door; naught but the appetizing dishes going beyond, these in their sight, possessing no particular merit.

We, knowing that the influence radiating from the Kitchen, can be the best, believe that no such horrible results will follow the present tendency of affairs; and that this tendency can and will become a universal condition.

Though we meet with many good housekeepers,

yet we hold that the natural born house-keeper is rarely found.

Take the average little girl in those years when imagination makes a palace out of a few staves arranged as a ground plan, and she almost invariably wants to have charge of the "parlor," and see the "company;" and if it so happens that she can prevail on no other playmate to oversee the kitchen, her family of dolls will starve before she can tear herself from the beloved, much-adorned parlor to look after their hungry mouths.

But generally, circumstances are such that before she has had entire charge of a kitchen of her own, she has had drilled into her, either by her mother, or thro' the agency of a cooking school, some principles which enable her to do fairly well.

There are many things to be considered in housekeeping for it consists of a perfect conglomeration of all trades.

But when you can find the true housekeeper you will find that she makes the kitchen the center upon which hinges the fate of all house keeping enterprises. If all is running smoothly in the kitchen, harmony is preserved, & the machinery of the whole household, well regulated.

Many claim that no woman can do all this, & have any time & strength left for the numerous other duties awaiting her out of the kitchen. This is certainly true when the kitchen is such an one as we often see, in which no thought has been given to the arrangement & disposal of furniture and utensils with regard to convenience, the saving of time & labor.

It is a great nervous strain on a woman, and she should not be expected to do the work of two or three men, the cooking & other housework as well.

Let the masculine members of the household do their share in arranging the furniture the way it is wanted and see that a sufficient supply of wood & of water is on hand, and the average woman can with intelligent planning of her work, perform her household duties & not be a "slave" necessarily.

The thoughtful planning of work, is almost as essential, as material to work with. One cook-book states, "the most worthless unit in a family is an ill-managing wife".

But there is another view of the question. Any woman with a spark of true womanliness about her, and a moderate amount of training, will when placed in the right kind of a kitchen, do the right kind of work. For it is also said, "Convenient kitchen make

patient housewiver:

And now what is the kitchen to be like, in which the housekeeper is to spend much of her time, and at the same time not be a drudge?

In all phases of life we find environment to be the factor which has the greatest influence on the work one does. And so we find the one who has the kitchen work to do, doing it well in proportion as she is helped or hindered by the arrangement of the room.

If she would be able to leave her kitchen when the work is finished, without utter & complete weariness of body, she must save herself every step she can.

This can first be looked after in building the room.

While one does not like to feel inconvenienced by insufficient room, yet we would raise as great complaint concerning a large kitchen. Unless it must be used as sitting room & dining room as well, let the room be as small as one can work in with comfort.

Otherwise the temptation to "spread things around" the room will make more steps than a woman of ordinary strength can afford to take.

The height of the room is another important factor in surroundings. A ceiling extending two or three feet above the window, affords a first-class place for odors and smoke to rise into & "stay in". While

a ceiling which is less than nine & a half $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the floor, gives the room an oppressive air, and makes it almost insufferably hot in summer.

But if ones ceiling is low & cannot be otherwise, one must make the best of it by having the tint of the walls and window curtains as light as possible.

The subject of curtains for kitchen windows might well be considered. Those who have much work to do at the kitchen table, will find that a long curtain is a decided nuisance, for it is almost certain to flop into some dish on the table. The window shades are necessities; & so sash curtains with these are generally found most convenient.

Good wire screens must be kept in the windows if one would keep the fly out of the cream.

Another important consideration is the kitchen floor. A woman can almost double her work by having the wrong kind of a floor. It is only the woman who has more money, time & energy than she needs elsewhere, who can afford to have any kind of carpet on her kitchen floor. A bare floor with rugs laid down where one must stand at work in winter if the floor be cold, is generally conceded to be the most easily cared for and comfortable.

Even after the carpets are banished, the manner in

which the floor is finished is significant.

A soft pine floor which is soiled by whatever touches it, will, if not painted, break a woman's back many times over, before it wears out. If such a floor is inevitable, it can be improved by laying on several coats of one of the paints which give a hard finish, of a color which does not show dust.

When it can be obtained, the most desirable floor is the hard pine, oiled. It needs beside the regular sweeping only to be wiped up with the mop occasionally. A speck of grease does it no harm; instead really improves it.

Now that the kitchen itself is planned with as many windows as possible, it must be furnished in a way calculated to save time and energy.

If the cook wishes her oven to bake evenly and well, the stove must not be opposite a window or outside door, for the draft spoils the oven.

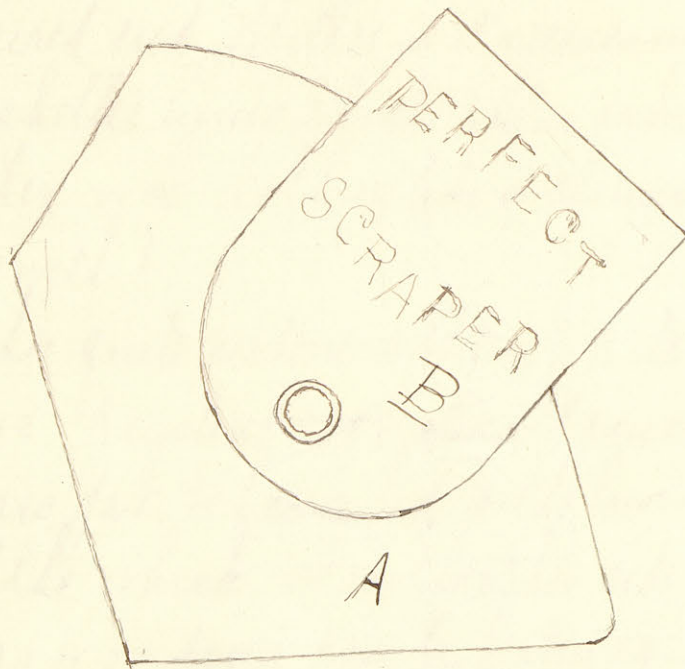
There is one article which may not seem at all essential in the kitchen, but which more than pays for the trouble of putting it in, by the comfort it gives. That is a ventilator over the stove. A large funnel of zinc or sheet iron placed directly over the stove & leading out of doors, carries away all odors of cooking, & prevents their being dispersed thro' the house.

For the sake of general convenience the sink should be at the left of the stove & near a window. When the sink is used for dish washing, a movable rack for draining the dishes is a convenience. A splash board above the sink is necessary, as is also a drawer for dish-towels under the sink & a cupboard in which may be kept materials for scouring.

The closet for ironed tinware should be near the stove. The oftentimes abused kitchen table should be placed across a window & end to end with the sink. Above the table & sink is a strip with screws in it, on which to hang the utensils likely to be used at either place, but never the dish cloth! The table is most easily cared for when the top is covered with oil cloth.

Of all the kitchen tables seen & tested, the most convenient is as follows:— it contains a drawer for knives & forks; one for towels; one divided lengthwise, one half for the rolling pin, the other subdivided for spices. The moulding board is shipped in above the wide middle drawer. Two deep drawers under the others, hold the flour.

A recent innovation, however, brings out a kitchen cabinet which is to hang on the wall by the table; & is so arranged that all kitchen stores can be disposed in its various drawers & cupboards; & yet so compact is it, that it occupies but very little space. The outside



Page 8.

is of japanned tin, and air-tight.

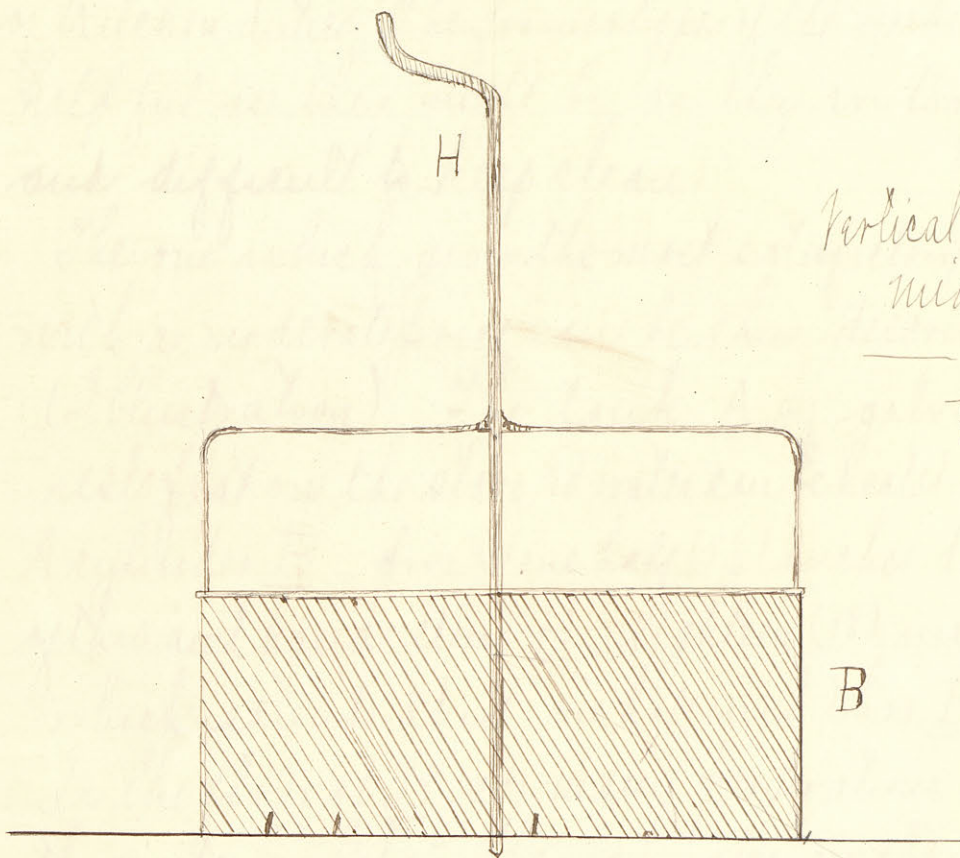
To see what class articles hang about the sink, we will describe one which is designed to aid the dish washer. It is a scraper for pots & pans. (Illustration.)

The blade A turns around in the handle B. Thus some part of the edge will be found to fit every corner. Hitherto we need no longer worry with old case-knives, whose thin worn blades play no false, & slack our fingers, & after all do not accomplish the desired end. Neither is it necessary to have untidy claw shells lying about. (One woman thought that there was nothing like a claw shell to scrape a kettle with.)

Another quite modern addition to kitchen comfort is the new Keystone egg beater. It consists of a cylindrical glass jar, & has a lid to the lower side of which is fastened the whisk, & on the other side, the crank.

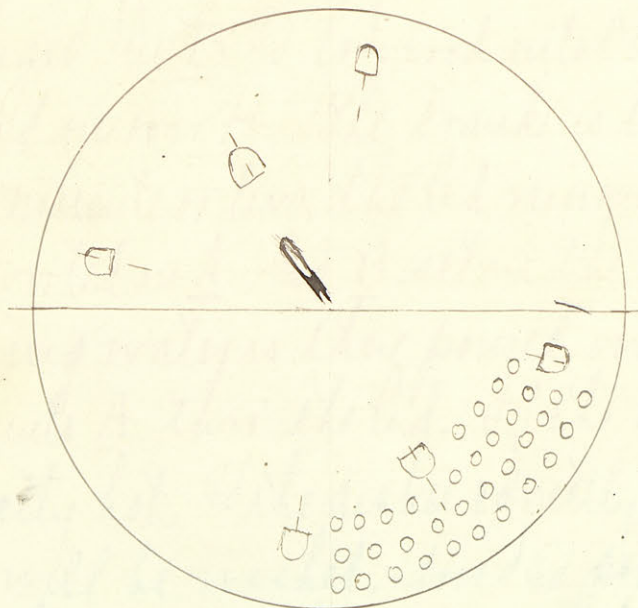
One egg or a dozen can be beaten equally well & easily. In less than a minute, egg whites will be as stiff & dry as they can be used.

The jar can also be used to beat cake in, or churn butter. The graduations for dry & liquid measure are given on the side of the jar. The jar can be taken on the lap while being used so one does not need to remain standing. With proper care the jar does not break readily.



Vertical section thro'
middle of B.

Page 9.



Horizontal
projection of B.

Perhaps the welcome invention of the age is that of the "Dishwasher", for it has lessened signally the most arduous of Kitchen duties. The former types of the machine are not so helpful as they might be, as they are large, clumsy, and difficult to keep clean.

The one which gives the most satisfactory results, along with a moderate price can be thus described: -

(Illustration!) The tank A of galvanized steel rests flat on the floor, & water can be heated directly in this. A cylinder B, five & one half ($5\frac{1}{2}$) inches deep, fits inside of this and has a stem H, eighteen (18) inches high which extends about one half inch thro B & rests on A. In the floor of B are many perforations thro' which the water "sprinkles". There are also six clips of the steel bent up to afford a catch for the dishes. The dishes are arranged in B & lowered into the suds in A, the lid slipped on over H. The crank is then turned rapidly for a minute or two, the lid removed, B lifted out, the lid inverted on A, & B set in the lid to drain.

Rinsing water is then poured over the dishes, draining into A thro' the lid. If the rinsing water be perfectly hot, & the dishes correctly arranged in B, they will be washed, dried & polished in three minutes.

This little machine does all that it is claimed to, and no one can estimate the amount of tired feeling

it saves the one who has charge of the dish-washing.

Edward Atkinson's "Sladdie" oven may also be mentioned as a means to labor saving; as it saves both food & fuel; & the saving of money & the saving of time are nearly synonymous terms in the kitchen.

Thus it is that science & the arts are coming to the rescue in the kitchen, which name is no longer a symbol of the "land of bondage". When the some times called queen of this realm will learn how to use, & how to care for these helpful things placed with in her reach, she will be worthy to be called "queen". But it is the lack of this knowledge as often as the lack of material, which so often prevents the hand which cooks the dinner from being "the hand that rules the world" in the right way.

And so we believe some thought as to the care of kitchen utensils would find place here.

The stove should be a good one, & to care for it properly, one must take instruction of the stove dealer. Thoughtfulness when cooking, that no grease is spattered on the stove, will do away with much blacking & rubbing.

The sink is generally the most neglected of kitchen appliances. The particles of vegetable & animal matter in the dish water, when poured thro' the pipe, stick to its sides.

decay, unite with the metal of the pipe, & results in poisonous gases which are forced up thro' the pipe by air-currents.

In this case the ever helpful sal soda is used. Twice a week a boiling solution of it should be poured down the pipe. Once a month use concentrated lye water similarly. Sal soda is also a great help in dish washing, if used $\frac{1}{2}$ teacupful once a day of a solution of one pound sal soda to one gallon of water.

The refrigerator, tho' not necessarily in the kitchen, is closely connected with it. The drain pipes should be cleaned every day with a cloth attached to a stiff wire. Every other day boiling sal soda water should be poured through it. The water pan should be washed often.

In cleaning dishes one can use pumice stone or mineral soap on any dishes. In drying them, if towels are used, it has been found to be less work in the end, to use more towels, than to let a few become too soiled.

Farther than these one can give but the most general directions, for each woman has her own method of work, necessitated by her surroundings.

In the saving of steps in the kitchen many neglect a most important item. I have known of houses where the only clock in the house was in the parlor, & every time the cook wished to know how near it was to mealtime, or

if the cake had been in long enough she had to go thro' dining-room & sitting room to ascertain. Countless steps & wrinkles might be saved by having a good clock in the kitchen.

Another thing which a woman who is up with the times cannot afford to be without is a gasoline stove. One need not fear them if directions for their care & use are given and followed.

The strength which is thus saved is as astonishing as the energy wasted & temper ruined over a common cook stove in summer.

Then one other thing which many find a necessity & all should find it such is a chair to be used in the kitchen. When some dish is being prepared which will not permit the cook's leaving the room, how much better for her to rest a little while for every little counts in rest as in work, than to stand nervously over the stove, or drum on the window pane with the spoon in hand, & allow herself to become still more tired & nervous. In the preparation of many dishes, one can save a vast deal of self by sitting down to it. And it is those women who look for little opportunities like this to rest, & use them who do not become impatient & self-forgiving in the oft-times monotonous kitchen duties.