

THE HOME LAUNDRY

The following paper by Miss Ethel Tennant, University of Saskatchewan, is printed in full owing to many requests for its publication.

The aims of laundering are:—1. To get clothes clean (a) To make them sanitary. (b) To make them absorbent or to renew their powers of absorption. 2. To preserve the original finish in the process of washing and finishing. To be an efficient housekeeper this last must be learned: (a) to be able to do work oneself, with the least amount of energy expended and with the best results. (b) To be able to tell others how to do it.

As a house-hold process, laundering often proves an arduous task instead of an interesting occupation, for, unfortunately, many houses are not equipped in a way to remove the burdens of wash-day.

WATER FOR LAUNDERING

A bountiful supply of water good for laundry purposes is a most important factor in successful laundering. Water is the natural solvent for much of the dirt which accumulates on clothing and it acts as a carrier to rid the clothing of all forms of dirt, both soluble and insoluble. Good drinking water is not necessarily equally good for laundry purposes as water may hold in solution, substances not hurtful to health but very detrimental to cleaning purposes. A good water for the laundry should be clean, soft, clear, odorless, free from discoloration, free from iron, and free from organic matter.

HARD AND SOFT WATER

The characteristic known as hardness is due to the presence of lime salts. Hard water is not the best for laundry purposes, as lime salts decompose the soap used, forming in its place an insoluble lime soap which collects as a curd on the surface of the water. This soap decomposition takes place as long as any lime remains and the cleansing properties of soap are not in operation until this is accomplished. Hard water is said to weaken the fabric by leaving minute particles of the lime soap compound in its pores. If the available supply of water is hard, the problem