

WATER SUPPLY AND THE FARMER'S WIFE

Lifting a Ton of Water a Day

During the water conference at Lethbridge the chairman read this quotation from "Farm Efficiency," which he said contained about as much common sense in small bulk as he had ever seen. The booklet is by Xenophon Caverno of the Kewanee Public Utilities Company, of Kewanee, Illinois.

"President Joe Cook of the Mississippi Normal college, in a bulletin of the United States Bureau of Education, makes the rather startling statement that the average farmer's wife has to lift a ton of water a day. Here is how he figures it:

"The getting of the water from the source of supply to the point of application requires more manual labor than any other item of housekeeping. The water for the kitchen has to be lifted from the well, carried to the kitchen, poured into a kettle, poured out of the kettle into the dishpan, and from the dishpan out of doors. This makes six times the water is handled; and a bucket of water containing two gallons, with the containing vessel will weigh 20 pounds. When this is handled six times, the total lifting is 120 pounds. The cooking of three meals a day on a meagre allowance of water will necessitate 10 buckets, which will make for cooking alone 1200 pounds of lifting per day. When to this is added the water necessary for bathing, scrubbing and the weekly wash, it will easily bring the lift per day up to a ton; and the lifting of a ton a day will take the elasticity out of a woman's step, the bloom out of her cheek, and the enjoyment out of her soul."

"Imagine an average farm home without modern improvements and conveniences. Picture to yourself an average farmer's wife as she goes through her daily routine. Follow every step from the time she starts the fire in the frigid kitchen till she lays wearily down the last pair of mended stockings at night. Now, by magic transfer her in her sleep into a house with just plain conveniences, a heating system, running water, hot and cold, a bathroom with lavatory, closet and bath tub, a sanitary system of sewage disposal, a power plant that not only pumps the water but runs an electric lighting plant with storage battery; a power washing machine and wringer, a power generator and churn, a vacuum cleaner and perhaps an electric flatiron and a little motor to run the sewing machine.

Give her an extra hour to sleep. The kitchen is warm, the water is hot and she can get breakfast in a jiffy on the oil stove. Now picture to yourself her day's work and her day's uplift to body, mind and soul. It is the difference between losing and winning, between conquering and being conquered. Look at these pictures from the standpoint of efficiency, of humanity, of romance. No magic of Aladdin's lamp could work a greater transformation or bring greater joy and comfort.

And what would be the cost? A long spell of sickness and first class funeral would buy the whole plant. The wages of a hired girl or two weeks of a nurse and doctor would much more than carry the interest on the investment; so would the price of a fair cow or a poor horse."