

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

"The number of inhabitants who may be supported in any country upon its internal produce depends about as much upon the state of the Art of Cookery as upon that of Agriculture : but if Cookery be of so much importance, it certainly deserves to be studied with the greatest of care. Cookery and Agriculture are arts of civilized nations. Savages understand neither of them."—*Count Rumford's Works*, Vol. I.

The importance of the Art of Cookery is very great ; indeed, from the richest to the poorest the selection and preparation of food often becomes the chief object in life. The rich man's table is luxuriously spread ; no amount of money is spared in procuring the rarest delicacies of the season. Art and Nature alike contribute to his necessities. The less wealthy have, indeed, fewer resources, yet these may be greatly increased by the knowledge of what may be called trifling details and refinement in the art of cookery, which depend much more on the *manner* of doing a thing than on the cost attending it. To cook well, therefore, is immensely more important to the middle and working classes than to the rich, for they who live by the "sweat of their brow," whether mentally or physically, must have the requisite strength to support their labor. Even to the poor, whose very life depends upon the produce of the hard earned dollar, cookery is of the greatest importance. Every wife, mother, or sister should be a good plain cook. If she has servants she can direct them, and if not, so much the more must depend upon herself. To such we venture to give a few general hints. An old saying (to be found in one of the earliest cookery books): "First catch your hare, etc." has more significance than is generally supposed. To catch your hare well, you must spend your income judiciously. This is the chief thing. In our artificial state of society, every income, to keep up appearances, has at least half as much more to do than it can afford. In the selec-