

THE HOUSEHOLD.

USEFUL SUGGESTIONS.

Never wash a bread-board in an iron sink. The iron will leave a black mark on the board, which it is difficult to remove. Wash the board on the table where you have used it; use cold water, and scrub occasionally with sand-soap. In scraping dough from the board, scrape with the grain of the wood, and hold the knife in a slanting direction, to prevent roughening the surface of the board. Wash, and wipe dry, and never let dough accumulate in the cracks. Have one board for bread and pastry, and keep it smooth. Use a smaller board for rolling crumbs and pounding and cleaning meat and fish.

A Dover egg-beater should never be left to soak in water, as the oil will be washed out of the gears and the beater be hard to turn; or, if used again before it be dry, the oil and water will spatter into the beaten mixture. Use it with clean hands, and then the handle will require no washing. Wipe the wires with a damp cloth immediately after using, dry thoroughly and keep it well oiled.

All dishes should be scraped before washing. A small wooden knife is best for this purpose. Bread and cake bowls, or any dishes in which flour or eggs have been used, are more easily cleaned if placed in cold water after using, or washed immediately.

Clear up as you work; it takes but a moment then, and saves much time and fatigue afterward.

Never put pans and kettles half-filled with water on the stove to soak. It only hardens whatever may have adhered to the kettle, and makes it much more difficult to clean. Keep them full of cold water, and soak them away from the heat.

Kitchen knives and forks should never be placed in the dish-water. Many err in thinking it is only the handles which should not be wet. The practice of putting the blades into a pitcher of very hot water is wrong, as the sudden expansion of the steel by the heat causes the handles to crack. Keep the knives out of the water, but wash thoroughly with the dish-cloth, rub them with mineral soap or brick dust, and wipe them dry. Keep them bright, and sharpen often on a sandstone. The disadvantage and vexation of dull tools would be avoided if every woman would learn to use a whet-stone and where and when to apply a little oil.

Milk will sour quickly if put into dishes which have not been scalded. They should first be washed in clear, cold water, then in hot, soapy water, then rinsed in clear, boiling water, and wiped with a dry, fresh towel. Do not forget to scrape the seams and grooves of a double boiler.

Ironware should be washed, outside as well as inside, in hot, soapy water, rinsed in clean, hot water, and wiped dry, not with the dish-cloth, but with a dry towel. Dripping-pans, Scotch bowls and other greasy dishes should be scraped, and wiped with soft paper, which will absorb the grease. The paper will be found useful in kindling the fire, and is a great saving of water, which is sometimes an object. A tablespoon of soda added to the water will facilitate the cleaning.

Kitchen mineral soap or pumice stone may be used freely on all dishes. It will remove the stains from the white knife-handles, that brown substance that adheres to earthen or tin baking-dishes, and the soot which collects on pans and kettles used over a wood or kerosene fire. Tins should be washed in clean, hot, soapy water. Rub them frequently with mineral soap, and they may be kept as bright as when new. Sauce-pans and other tin or granite dishes browned by use may be cleaned by letting them remain half an hour in boiling soda-water, then rubbing with a wire dish-cloth or stiff brush.

Keep a granite pan near the sink to use in washing vegetables, and use the hand-basin only for its legitimate purpose. Pare vegetables into the pan, and not into the sink.

A strainer or any old quart tin pan with small holes in the bottom is a great help in keeping a sink clean. Pour the coffee and tea-grounds, the dish-water, and everything that is turned into the sink, through the strainer first, and then empty the con-

tents of the strainer into the refuse pail. Never use a ragged or linty dish-cloth. The lint collects round the sink-spout, and often causes a serious obstruction. A dish-mop is best for cups and cleanest dishes, but a strong linen cloth should be used for everything which requires hard rubbing. Wash the sink thoroughly, flush the drain-pipe often with hot suds or soda-water, wipe dry, and rub with a greased cloth or with kerosene. Keep it greased if you wish to prevent its rusting.—*The Household.*

INEXPENSIVE DISHES.

An edible and nourishing soup may be made with potatoes for the foundation. Boil half a dozen of these vegetables, and when they are nearly done, drain off the water and cover them with a fresh supply. Add a slice of onion, a stalk of celery, three or four peppercorns, and a bunch of parsley; boil until the potatoes are done. Strain the potatoes through a sieve while a quart of milk is heating to the boiling point. Rub a tablespoonful of flour and butter together and stir into the boiling milk, stirring constantly until it thickens, so that it will not burn; pour this over the potatoes, and mix all smooth. Season to taste, and serve immediately.

It may not be generally known that almost any kind of cooked vegetables, which may be left over, can be used in preparing vegetable fritters. Apples and fruits of various kinds have been long used thus, but vegetables can also serve satisfactorily in the same way. Celery, cucumbers, carrots and potatoes are said to be especially good for the purpose. The vegetable chosen can be sliced or chopped into very fine dice, seasoned and mixed with the fritter batter. A large breakfastcupful of batter to a large teacupful of the vegetable is a good proportion. When thoroughly mixed the preparation is dropped, a tablespoonful at a time, and browned slightly. They can be served with chopped parsley sprinkled over them, if desired.

A recipe for 'Scotch broth,' which I find among my papers, may be serviceable to some housekeepers, so I transcribe it here. It may be made of either a neck of mutton or a 'resumé' of beef. Three pounds of meat are put into a large pot with three quarts of water and a teacupful of pearl barley. When it comes to a boil, it is to be carefully skimmed, and salt is added to taste, then it is left to boil for an hour. Then a grated carrot, a small turnip cut into dice, two finely shredded leeks, and a very finely minced cabbage, or an equal amount of greens or 'kale' (whence the Scotch name of the broth), which have been left standing in cold water, are added to the broth, after which it should boil another hour. The meat is then lifted out, a little finely minced parsley and other seasoning, as desired, are added to the broth, which is then ready to serve. The meat is served in a separate dish garnished with some of the broth vegetables, or with whole ones cooked in the broth, and a little of the latter added as gravy. After the vegetables are added to the broth, Scotch cooks, it is said, stir it constantly with a wooden spoon or a long round stick which they call a 'spurtle.' As this stays in the broth until it is served, the lid of the pot is always tilted, not tightly closed as in making other soups.

I also add a method of making meat pie, although I think those made with alternating layers of pastry and meat and potatoes are equally good. Cold roast beef, steak, or other good meat may be cut in small, thin slices, and a layer laid in the bottom of a pie or pudding dish; over this a little flour, salt and pepper are dredged. The second layer is made of minced tomatoes and onions chopped very fine. The meat and vegetables are placed in alternate layers adding the flour and seasoning to each, until the dish is nearly filled. If any of the beef gravy is at hand, it is to be added, if not a gravy can be made by trying a little of the fat of the meat and adding to it a little water. A crust to be spread over the top, about an inch thick, is made of potatoes, well boiled and mashed, mixed with half a cupful of cream or rich milk, a little butter and salt. If the top of this crust be brushed over with egg it makes it nicer. It requires about twenty-five minutes for baking.—*Mrs. Brown, in New York Observer.*

'A SOUL ABOVE BUTTONS.'

'In the future there are two or three women who are going to rise up and call me blessed,' remarked the mother of three boys.

'Two or three special ones, do you mean?' 'Yes indeed, I mean just that. I have no ambition to be a benefactor to the general public. And I don't know, by the way, that I have any special kindly feeling to the two or three women I spoke of. It isn't for the sake of my affection toward them I'm earning their blessing now.'

'Well, how are you earning it?' 'Why, I'm training my three sons to sew on their own buttons! They are beginning to do it of their own accord. They don't follow me about the house now, with a coat in one hand and a button in the other. They go and get a needle and thread and sew the button on. They've found out it saves time and strength and words.'

'It seems cruel to make boys sew on their own buttons.'

'Cruel? It's kind! Those boys won't always have me to sew on buttons for them. They would be badly off indeed if they had to do it some time, and didn't know how. It's right they should learn to do such things for themselves. A boy should be taught to make his own bed, put away his own clothing, and sweep and dust his room occasionally, and not always expect an overworked mother or younger sister to do such work for him. I think a boy ought not to be entirely ignorant even of cooking. It might be a great advantage to him some time to be able to make a good cup of coffee, broil a chop, or cook potatoes. Some people profess to think that such knowledge comes by nature; but I believe it's oftener the case that if not learned early, it has to be bought of bitter experience, and we all know experience is a high-priced teacher to employ.'

'Then it's for the boy's own sake, after all, and for the sake of their future wives, that you let them sew on their own buttons?'

'Why, of course! But sometimes I do think how deliciously some girl will be surprised. When one of those boys finds a button off his shirt, he won't stand and declare there hasn't been one on in that place for at least six months. He will know better. He will only say, meekly: 'How careless I am! My dear, will you kindly hand me my little button-box out of the front right-hand corner of the second drawer? I must sew on this button before I can put on the garment!'—*Harper's Bazar.*

SWEEPING A ROOM.

The preparation of a room for sweeping and the arrangement of the furniture after the room has been cleaned are by far the greater part of the work, writes Maria Parloa in the *Ladies' Home Journal*. The first step is to dust all the ornaments and place them on a firm table in another room. Next, dust all the plain furniture, using a soft cloth and removing the lighter pieces from the room. Now beat and brush all the stuffed articles, using a brush to clean the tufting and creases.

When everything movable has been taken from the room and all the large pieces covered, dust the pictures with a feather duster or a cloth; then cover the pictures. Brush the ceiling and walls with a long feather duster or a soft cloth fastened on a broom. Brush all dust from the tops of the doors and windows. Have the windows open all the while. If there be portieres and window draperies that can be taken down put them on the clothesline and shake them well.

Take up all the rugs, and, if you have grass in the yard, lay them upon it, right side down, and beat well with a switch or rattan; then shake. If you have no place where you can spread them, hang them on the line and beat them well. Have a good broom, not too heavy, for the carpets. Sweep in one direction only, taking short strokes. Take up the dirt with a dustpan and corn broom. When the dust settles, go over the carpet once more, having first freed your broom of all lint, thread, etc. When the dust has again settled, dust the room with a soft cloth.

Put three quarts of warm water and three tablespoonfuls of household ammonia in a pail. Wring a clean piece of old flannel out of this, and wipe every part of the carpet, wringing the cloth as it be-

comes soiled. Now wash the windows, and wipe off any marks there may be on the paint. Remove the coverings from the pictures and furniture, being careful not to scatter the dust. Bring back the rugs and hangings, and arrange them.

Finally, put the furniture and ornaments in place. If one has proper covers for the pictures and heavy pieces of furniture in the room, a great amount of trouble can be saved on the sweeping day. Buy cheap print cloth for the furniture. Have three breadths in the cover, and have it 3½ yards long. It should be hemmed, and the work can be done quickly on a sewing machine. I find six cloths a convenient number, although we do not always need so many.

FLOWERS ON THE TABLE.

After the linen is pronounced nice, and the little table appointments are in order, then, dear mother or sweet elder sister, do let us have flowers. Nothing is so productive of a good appetite as fresh flowers, wild ones especially, with the cool green leaves. Do not despair if you have but one or two to spare out of a scanty window garden. Put those in a slender vase rising out of your fruit dish filled with rosy apples; or lay them as a *boutonniere* before father, mother, or Tommy who is just down stairs after a siege of sore throat. If you live in the country you can always get the beautiful clusters of pine, or of other evergreen. For the home table, more than for any other use, we would counsel the keeping of flowers through the winter in our sitting-rooms. They are certainly lovely in our windows, giving brightness and beauty to all without as well as within; for the home table they are more than lovely they shed a Christian influence over every thought and act.

One thing do remember, to have your home every-day table just as attractive as the one to which you invite your honored guest. It pays to exert one's self for one's family. They never lose sight of it. Ten to one if the honored guest, tired with social courtesies, will not forget you in a day, or only remember your little affair as a debt to be paid back some time. We do not underestimate the duty of hospitality—Christ enjoined it upon us—but we do think we are more likely to err in the lack of the courtesy toward our own households. Be hospitable to them, we pray—thereby some of you may entertain angels unawares.

And next sweet duty, O dear brother or sister of the household of Christ, do invite lovingly to your happy home table those who are sorry, who are struggling, who are desolate. Brighten life enough for them to see that God is in it, and help them to be willing to arise and struggle on. Let them see that one family believes in them; is sorry for them, loves them. You will enjoy it with them; you cannot help it. You are made in the image of Christ, and nothing can prevent you from feeling His blessing thrill your lives. Eat together, as Christians should, in all love and unity.—*Christian at Work.*

SELECTED RECIPES.

FRUIT TAPIOCA.—Wash half a cup of tapioca, put it into a double boiler with a pint of water, and cook until the grains are soft and transparent. If granulated tapioca is used, one hour is sufficient time. Then add to it half a cup of grape or currant jelly, and mix until the jelly is dissolved; turn it into a pudding dish. Serve cold, with sugar and cream.

RHUBARB CHARLOTTE.—Cut stalks of rhubarb until you have a quart measure full. Then cook with just enough water to cover until very tender. Add sugar to taste, from two to three cupfuls, a scant tablespoonful of butter and the grated peel of a lemon. Then add the well beaten whites of two eggs. Pour into a glass dish, cover with whipped cream and eat ice cold.

RHUBARB PUDDING WITH MERINGUE.—One quart of milk, one cupful of stale cake crumbs, four eggs, four tablespoonfuls of sugar, saltspoonful of salt. Mix crumbs, salt and sugar together, then add the milk and well beaten yolks. Mix well and bake. It should be done in about three quarters of an hour in a moderate oven. Then take from the oven, cover first with sweetened stewed rhubarb, second with a meringue made from the beaten whites of the eggs and three tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar. Return to the oven for five minutes. Eat hot or cold.

SOUR MILK MOLASSES CAKE.—One-half cupful of sour milk, one-half cupful of molasses, one cupful of sugar, one-fourth cupful of lard or butter, one teaspoonful of ginger, one-half teaspoonful of cinnamon, one-half teaspoonful of cloves, one-half cupful of raisins seeded, two and one-half cupfuls of flour, one-half dessertspoonful of soda. Heat sugar, butter, molasses and spices together till lukewarm, beat for ten minutes, then add the sour milk in which the soda has been dissolved, then the flour, last the eggs. Bake in a broad, shallow pan.