

HOUSEHOLD.

House-to-House Cooking.

We can get women to come into our homes and work by the day at washing, scrubbing, sewing or almost any kind of work, says a contributor to the 'American Agriculturist,' but where is the woman on whom I could rely to come into my home and both cook and serve a good meal for me, with little or no supervision? Many housekeepers have no need for help, except on occasions; they have no room to give up to a girl, and do not feel that they can afford the expense of steady help, but would gladly pay a good round price to the woman who could come in and take the responsibility of serving good meals in good style when such help is needed. I know that more than a few times, when I have had company drop down on me, I would have gladly paid any sum that was within the bounds of reason to the woman who could have cooked and served the meal and let me visit. It may be only one guest or it may be several, but the time is limited, and how we do grudge the time spent in needful work! Let any woman perfect herself as a good all-round cook and take some pains to keep posted as to the newer styles of arranging the table and serving the food, and I know that she would have plenty to do, at her own price. Caterers are not to be had in the small towns, and yet those who entertain like to feel sure that everything is up to date, and as well served as is possible. The woman who would keep herself posted as to the 'last thing' in the line of what should be served and how it should be served, as well as to the latest arrangement of the table furnishings, would find herself in demand at nearly all the teas, lunches, and light affairs, to an extent that would materially add to her income.

The Nursery Floor.

(Frances Fisher Wood.)

The floor should be bare, of either painted or hard wood, and covered in the centre with a thick, warm rug. It is often urged that bare floors are undesirable for a child who creeps or plays most of the time upon the floor. If a baby is learning to creep in cold weather, it is not, however, necessary, and certainly not desirable that it should be allowed to creep upon the floor at all. The value of creeping bears no relation to the distance through which the child propels itself. Creeping is simply the preliminary exercise by which a child strengthens its limbs for the initial effort to walk. It gets just as much exercise by crawling back and forth over a properly protected surface three feet by five as it can by sweeping a floor fifteen feet by twenty. It saves trouble with a creeping child, and protects it against many colds and much dirt, if it is confined in a pen placed in one corner of the room; or, better still, the child may be raised from the floor by placing him on some low couch surrounded with a railing. Such a pen, while it may be contrived easily and without much expense, may also be designed so elegantly as to be really an ornament to any room in the house. In this enclosure a baby may be placed during the months from the period when he begins to creep until such time as he has learned to walk with certainty and vigor. By means of the sides of the pen he is soon able to raise himself to his feet, and by clutching its firm rail he easily learns to walk round its circumference, which to him seems endless. With a few simple play-things for company inside the rail, and with a friendly face and voice outside but within sight and hearing, the child during this usually most troublesome period of its young life, becomes simply no trouble at all, but grows and thrives to the extent of its power, and demonstrates conclusively that it is absolutely unnecessary for a creeping baby to undertake the dangerous navigation of the nursery floor.

Older children can be taught to choose, when playing upon the floor, the part that is protected by the rug. But the average child sits on the floor by far too great a proportion of the time. It is very easy, by a little forethought, to counteract this tendency by providing a table, such as is used in the kindergarten. Even a plain cutting table will serve the purpose. Sitting or standing beside this, the child will find upon its limited surface sufficient room to create a world of interest. By the force of his

vivid imagination it becomes successively a complication of railway tracks, a field of exciting battles, a barn-yard, or Mount Ararat disgorging the inhabitants of the Ark. By this provision of a table or tables there is less conflict and misunderstanding, even where several children are engaged in play, than is possible by the indiscriminate use of the floor surface; since each child may enjoy exclusive right to his own little table or definite portion of table, and within its limited space rule an undisputed monarch.

The children should not be encouraged or even permitted to indulge unduly their natural instinct for destruction; they must not, on the other hand be continually worried by warnings not to touch this, or injure that, or break the other. Every article in the child's room should be there for his particular convenience and enjoyment, and he should be allowed its full, free use, being taught, meanwhile, the difference between the use and abuse of his own property. Neither should he be reproved or punished for any accidental or occasional injury to the articles he handles. The muscles of the little fingers are not yet firm; cerebral development is not yet sufficiently co-ordinated to control their action. And, therefore, while it is proper to express sorrow or regret at any accidental destruction, the child should not be alarmed or punished for an occurrence for which he was in no wise responsible.—'Harper's Bazar.'

Aprons.

'Our grandmothers always wore aprons when about their work—a custom their first daughters would do well to imitate. If a woman fancies that an apron is a rather useless invention, let her wear one for a single morning when about her work, and note how soiled it becomes. Then let her reflect upon the fact that, but for this protection, her dress would have received all that dirt.

'But I wear a black dress always!' says one woman.

But the dirt is there, even if it does not show. The fact that it is present should be an offence to a woman. And while certain kinds of dirt may not affect black, grease or light dust does, and the sombre dress soon looks worse than would a colored gown. Then, too, an apron saves the front of a dress a vast amount of wear and tear, and lengthens the period, that is at best too short, before the front breadth of a skirt becomes shiny and worn.

Gingham aprons are invariably worn by a careful housekeeper when in the kitchen. But there are many women who do not always have at hand a large white apron to slip on while the bric-a-brac is dusted, or while they are doing the hundred and one trifles that fall to the lot of the house-mother. An apron for this purpose should be plain, or finished with wide tucks, and innocent of elaborate embroidery or of lace.

Even the most fastidious husband will rather like to see the snowy apron over his wife's morning gown as she pours his coffee and helps the bairns to their porridge. And he will probably like it doubly well if he appreciates that it will make the aforesaid gown last twice as long as it would otherwise.—'Harper's Bazar.'

Tact in the Sick Room.

If there must be talking in a sick room let it be distinct and not in a suppressed voice, for nothing is more irritating to the sick than whispering, whether or not it is an effort to hear. No matter how weak or indifferent, or in how much of a stupor he may appear to be in, the patient may yet be conscious of every word you say, and be discouraged by any unfavorable remark you make in his hearing. In his weak condition it may be the last strain the nervous system is able to bear; and thus your own words may perhaps prove the means of making your unfavorable prognosis of his case true. Persons in such a very delicate condition sometimes only partially hear and understand remarks thoughtlessly made in their presence, and their minds being weak, and the imagination unrestrained, their worst fears are excited, and the stimulus of hope being taken away, the feeble flame of life is thus sometimes extinguished when it might otherwise have rallied for many more years of life. There is no doubt that many well-meaning and well-intentioned persons with every desire to minister to the wants of those who are on a sick bed, helpless and

in pain, add to the sufferings of the patients by this thoughtless and inconsiderate conduct. A little exercise of tact and common sense would alter all this.—'New York Ledger.'

Hurried Meals.

(By Annie M. Toohy, In 'Christian Work'.)

It is to be regretted that in many of even our well regulated households the habit of hurrying through family meals is so general. Some housewives fancy that the preparation and eating of meals should be the least matters of interest in the domestic routine, and consequently present a very unedifying and unattractive table for the family. Hasty eating, unless necessity compels it, is a coarse habit as well as a dangerous one to the digestive organs, and should be avoided. Any well bred mother will train her children to slow eating, and the habit of being able to observe all the essential rules of table etiquette at early and impressionable ages. Even the humblest family table should be cleanly and tastefully set. The use of napkins is indispensable. The family table should be made a shrine of kindred harmony, exchange of thought as well as material enjoyment.

Selected Recipes.

BOSTON BROWN BREAD.

Two cupfuls of entire wheat flour, one cupful cornmeal, two-thirds cupful of molasses, one large cupful of sweet milk, one cupful of sour milk, salt, one teaspoonful of soda. Steam three hours and bake one hour.

Resolved.

This resolution was introduced by the Temperance Committee at the Methodist Conference, in Montreal, the other day:

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