

## "Good Housekeeping."

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CANADIAN housekeepers are as a rule very good, and the few remarks I wish to make on the possibility of improving them, (tho' I fear some of my country women will think me vastly presumptuous for suggesting that such a thing is possible,) may have some freshness as I view the matter by the light of two continents, so to speak—for tho' a born Canadian, and now for twelve years a Canadian farmer's wife, I spent my girlhood in various parts of Europe and always took an interest in cooking and housekeeping. Long before my "fate" overtook me, I thought I should like to be a farmer's wife, but since then I have often thought with Lord Dundreary, that many things "wanth impwoving." First I noticed how much older women in this country looked, especially farmers' wives and daughters, than those of the same age in Europe, at least in the British Isles, and how much more gold, many of them carried in their teeth than in their pockets. I think I now know why. I used to gaze in wonder, not unmixed with envy and admiration, at the amount of work some farmers' wives will get through and live, and I thought the labors of Hercules were light and easy compared to theirs, for he never had a baby to mind, while doing his little "chores," and his were more satisfactory too, for he got them all finished in course of time. The work of a farmer's wife seemed to me more like that of the other poor fellow we hear of, who kept forever rolling a stone up a hill, and as soon as it got to the top, down it came, and he had to go over all his work again, which was of no use after all. Now I think some of the farmhouse work is like that. One thing is the constant scrubbing of floors. It wears out the floor, and it wears out the woman; they should be all painted (the floors, not the women,) or oiled and varnished, a piece of tin put round the stove, and oilcloth in front of the kitchen table. Paint or oil the tables too. Don't have so many heavy iron pots, they tire the back to lift; use long-handled sauce-pans as much as possible. Don't take a clean towel to lift them, or grab the oven door, and pull out the pan of buns with your apron, and then have to wash it. Use folded paper as much as possible, and burn it when soiled. Another of the worse than useless labors, is rag carpet-making; they are unwholesome in a bed room, barbarous in a drawing-room, and regular dirt traps in a dining room or kitchen. The rags they are made of could be utilized better as dusters or lamp cloths, or to exchange for tins with the rag-man. The time could be better spent in reading, or even sleeping, and the money spent for the warp and weaving of the horrible thing would buy a decent carpet for the best room. It might be from 18 inches, to 3 feet smaller all round than the room, thus yards of carpet would be saved, much trouble avoided in lifting, and cleanliness insured round the edges of the room which should be stained or painted. But the worst work of super-erogation, is the all-prevalent pie. Too many pies, and too many pickles, are the real cause of dyspepsia. Pie at breakfast, must be an invention of the doctors and the d— combined. Fancy giving a child a slice of pie, (truly called a wedge,) to take to school, and it has to be a tough pie too. If they require something between meals, let it be a piece of brown bread, or oaten cake, with a little butter or honey. Too much pie, pickles, and cake, and

too little soup. We should have a stock-pot like the French. I have seen in many houses, bones and scraps thrown away which would have made excellent soup. When cold joints are nearly finished, cut the remaining meat off the bones, put them in your stock-pot, mince the meat in a machine, and fry in balls, or stew with gravy, adding a little flour, onion etc.; put toast round the dish, and you will have a tempting dinner. The soup may be made substantial and delicious by the addition of peas, potatoes or many other things, costing next to nothing. I would impress the point, that time should be made for reading; the mind requires it, the body requires it, for if the mind be not tranquilized the body will not rest. The age we live in requires it. We should all take MASSEY'S ILLUSTRATED, as a tonic after the dinner things are washed up. Every farmer should manage to afford all the labor-saving appliances for his house and his girls, that he never grudges for his boys and his fields. A washing machine is a boon, to supersede the old pain-in-the-chest-giving, and clothes-destroying washboard. I could name one or two, but fear they might say I was "an agent." The washing would be done with half the labor, and the making and mending, diminished greatly, for the clothes would not wear out half so fast. This I know for certain. I would have creamers to save washing milkpans and for other good reasons, and I would have a butter-board and roller, instead of the stupid old bowl and ladle that gives such hard work and spoils the butter, which should be washed in the churn; for fear of being invidious I will not say what churn, but not the old dash.

If one wants to pack away butter, the easiest, and I believe best plan, is to make what can be spared from each churning, into a nice roll, wrap it in wet white muslin, and immerse it in a tub of prepared brine, and so on until the tub is full of rolls. Instead of the troublesome packing of eggs in salt, etc., just drop them as you get them, in a solution of lime and salt, kept in a covered crock in the cellar. A refrigerator is a great means of saving journeys to and from the cellar and ice house, as the day's supply of butter, milk, meat, and so forth can be kept near at hand. And a carpet-sweeper, I well know, saves both woman and wool; and reduces dusting to a minimum. All these things make housekeeping less laborious, and illness less frequent, and thus in many ways provide time for the precious reading which no woman in the present day can afford to do without.

"Good housekeeping," in my idea is to make home beautiful, food wholesome, doctors scarce, and to do it all with economy of strength and money and to be ever progressing to higher and nobler stand-points of perfection and happiness.

### Turpentine in the Household.

AFTER a housekeeper fully realizes the worth of turpentine in the household she is never willing to be without a supply of it, says the *Home Queen*. It gives quick relief to burns; it is an elegant application for corns; it is good for rheumatism and sore throats. Then it is a sure preventive against moths; by just dropping a trifle in the drawers, chests, and cupboards it will render the garments secure from injury during the summer. It will keep ants and bugs from the closets and store-rooms by putting a few drops in the corners and upon the shelves; it is sure destruction to bedbugs, and it will effectually drive them away from their haunts if thoroughly applied to all the joints of the bedsteads, and injures neither furniture nor clothing. A spoonful of it added to a pail of warm water is excellent for cleaning paint.

### Farm Repairs.

FARMERS who live some miles from mechanics' shops and hardware stores will often find it a matter of convenience as well as of economy to do their own repairing; and sometimes hours of valuable time will be thus saved. For this purpose, in addition to the common tools of pincers, broad-awls, gimlets, light and heavy hammers, screw drivers, etc., they should always have on hand a collection of screws of different sizes, copper wire, annealed wire, paint in a tight jar, copper straps, strong cord and twine, and a bottle, if not a barrel, of crude petroleum. Copper wire may be used for many purposes. In flexibility it is between twine and iron wire. A fractured thill or wagon-tongue may be made neat and strong by passing copper wire many times around it in close contact side by side, securing the ends with a short twist sunk in a slight depression so as not to project. Before beginning to wind, cut a small groove in the wood and lay the wire in this groove, so as to bring the two ends of the wire together on one side of this new copper band. If this work is neatly done, the new copper band will be an ornament rather than a defect. There are occasionally small fractures of various kinds which some persons try to mend with cord, but copper wire is stronger, neater and more durable. Next to copper wire, narrow copper straps sometimes answer an excellent purpose in mending splits in wooden surfaces, by laying the strap across the split, and screwing it to its place. Small nails will do in the place of screws, but they are less secure and are in greater danger of being drawn out. Leather straps are often used in the same way, but are still less secure. The neighbor who locked his smoke-house every night with a strong padlock to protect its valuable contents, hung the door with leather hinges, which were easily cut with a jack knife.

In the absence of copper wire, annealed iron wire may be used in some cases, and in the absence of both, strong twine will sometimes answer, if well soaked with paint or pine tar and dried. Nails are often used on wood instead of screws, and they will answer well if a hole to receive them is first made with an awl or gimlet, and clinching nails are used. (For machines and tools made of iron, screw-bolts of the right size are required.) We have seen the tongue of a sleigh which had been nearly broken off, securely and neatly mended by placing thin strips of tough wood on its four sides, extending nearly a foot each way, and nailing these strips. It would have been better to have used screws instead of nails, and still better to have first made one or two copper-wire bands slightly sunk in the wood, in addition. These four pieces, placed flat on the four sides, strengthened the pole in the same way that it should have been when set inside a tube the four all acting together.

In making any repair, never do it superficially or in a bungling manner, or it may cost more in the end than a new machine or a new part by a skillful mechanic. As a general rule, a machine which is often and continuously used, should be thoroughly and strongly repaired; one that comes into use but rarely, may be repaired in a more superficial manner. But prevention is always better than remedy, and strong, well made tools and machines should always be preferred to defective ones, even if costing considerably more; as the expense of mending and the required delay may be attended with still greater ultimate cost.

WORRY wears out and kills more than work.