

"It would be a merciful retribution," he concludes, "if the curse of the 'Ancient Mariner' were laid on the traders who conduct this traffic, and the women who indirectly employ them."

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Isn't it strange that we women who so pride ourselves on our gentleness of heart, should be guilty of causing such hideous cruelty that men have to intervene to prevent it? Surely thoughtlessness has been the demon at back of it all. When you come to think of it, how can any thinking woman wear the split body of a dead bird on her hat? What a loss to the joyousness of the universe in every little stilled voice! What an irreparable loss, as Thompson-Seton has said, "to all who love God's out of doors"! What a cruelty to the blessed little songsters themselves!

JUNIA.

### On Simplifying Housework.

When you think of it, it is little wonder that women—and farm women above all—should ask, "Give us hints on housecleaning. There is such an endless succession and crowding of work on most farms, such as city women know absolutely nothing about,—cows to be milked, butter to be made, gardens to be weeded, chickens to be fed, laundry to be accomplished—all this, in addition to the ordinary duties of cooking, cleaning, mending, and getting the children off to school. It is little wonder—is it?—that the farm woman should be practical. Perhaps her danger is that she may become too practical, too prone to forget that life requires art, and literature, and music, love of Nature and sympathy with all humans, as well as a perfectly-kept house and a swelling bank account—if such can be put under weigh. We need to watch so sharply, wherever we are, either in town or in country, to see that we do not become lopsided, and, if we are housekeepers, that we shall not become so depends very greatly upon the management of our work, so that time shall be saved for all things.

To return, it is rather difficult to map out how housecleaning may be simplified—unless one begins to work up to the process about a year before, as last week we tried to indicate; and, perhaps, this season, if one has never tried the "new efficiency" in housekeeping, there may be nothing for it but to forge through almost as usual. May not the very discouragement of the over-work, however, suggest that this time of housecleaning and the weeks that follow, be a hatching time of new ideas to be carried out from this day henceforth, so that never again shall the labor be quite so laborious, never again quite so tedious or so strength-sapping?

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Now, to turn to the "how" of it: Have those carpets cut down into rugs—9x12 is a good size for most rooms. With borders to match, they will be as pretty as can be, and, when fall housecleaning-time comes, you will wonder at the difference in the work. Finish the bare floor borders with "floor-finish," or with linoleum in wood tints if the floor is bad, and for this and all bare floor spaces, do get a dustless mop. It is a great convenience, and you have a right to it.

Surely no one nowadays has straw ticks, but not infrequently one still sees feather ones. Can't you banish them in favor of mattresses of good quality? Feather beds are hard to make, and the doctors say they are insanitary.

Have a sheet of zinc on the kitchen table, with a few bits of board for setting pots on to protect it; and keep a can of ammonia or Dutch cleanser, or even sifted salt and ashes, in the spot most conveniently reached. A dash of any of these cleansers will very quickly take the grime off the zinc top and the outside of pots and kettles.

Perhaps you haven't a kitchen cabinet, and can't afford one, but you can at least so arrange your kitchen that all utensils may be reached without a single unnecessary step. Imagine it—a rack on the wall above the work-table for pot-lids; hooks beneath for cooking-knives, ladles, forks, and spoons; at easy reach, pegs for saucepans and shelves for pans

and groceries—all within a very few steps of the cookstove.

Some people pile all pots, saucepans and pans, away out of sight, and give the kitchen the air of a living-room. As a result, when anything is needed there is a diving into pot-holes, and a clatter of tin and granite-ware as it is hauled out in the irritating search. Really, the Dutch kitchen is better,—the Dutch kitchen, with everything in sight, pans, kettles and skillets in shining rows, dry, clean, ready to be pounced upon at an instant's notice.

If the shelves can be closed in with glass doors, all the better; nothing handier can be placed in a kitchen than a large cupboard with a ledge for placing things on. If the kitchen be narrow enough so that things may be taken from the cupboard and placed upon the work-table almost with a turn, better still.

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"But," someone says, "we use our kitchen as a dining-room. I simply could not stand having the wall all cluttered up with tins." . . . But why not, then, screen off one end of it, the end containing the stove, the bake-table and cupboard,—and the pans? The cheeriest kitchen I ever saw was arranged in this way, two tall, four-leaved screens being all that were necessary.

Says someone else: "Why not keep all these things in the pantry?—For the simple reason that doing so means extra steps,—to the work-table, to the stove—and to the very busy woman every step counts. Some women, of course, still pin their faith to the pan-

try placed?—And so on to all the arrangements of the house.

Have you a cistern pump and sink in the kitchen? If it can be at all afforded, that is your right. So is a hard-water pump, not at the lower end of the orchard, but within easy reach. Have you a pulley clothes-line that will enable you to put on all the clothes without stepping out of your place on the back porch? It is a blessing indeed, especially in bad weather. . . . And, is it necessary for you to run out of the kitchen, down steps, and into a woodshed every time you want a stick of wood for the stove? Why not have a woodbox built in the kitchen, close to the stove, open at the back and lidded at the top? As the good man splits the wood, he tosses it in; when you want a stick, you raise the lid and there it is. Of course, you realize that woodshed and kitchen must adjoin, as they usually do, to permit of this.

Have you a dumb-waiter running from cellar to kitchen? And have you a dinner-wagon for moving things to the dining-table? Perhaps not, but here is a hint: Get the largest dishpan you can find and use it for carrying things back and forth. It will save you many an extra trip, and you will find it twice as good as a tray; it can be carried so much more easily, and there is so much less danger of things slipping off.

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Almost impossible to get along without, in any house where economy of strength and time are valued as they should be, is a washing-machine; an



Morning in the Valley

From a painting by F. H. Bridgen, Ontario Society of Artists' Exhibition, 1914.

try; the old conservatism forever hates change. But it is a positive fact that the "new efficiency" housekeeper is discarding the pantry wholesale in favor of the "efficiency kitchen." A pantry may be very useful for keeping provisions in, but when used as a general hold-all, it is likely to be a cluttered-up place, hard to keep in order, hard to find things in, an addition to instead of lightener of the work of housekeeping.

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Do you know that in some of the big manufacturing plants, experiments have been made to determine just how work may be done with the least possible waste of strength by unnecessary movement? It was found that time and strength were being wasted even through awkward and roundabout hand movements, and so instructors have been provided to teach the employees how to move while working.

Leaving out of the question the deadly tendency in such places to turn the people into mere human machines, a lesson may be learned here. Why take six steps, or ten, or twenty, in doing what three, with better management, may accomplish? Why stretch and reach for things which might be obtained with less effort by having shelves and hooks prop-

ironing-board, and clothes-horse also, both of which may be made at very little expense. Electric irons are not yet possible in many country places, although the extension of hydro-power may change that, but, in many parts of the United States, denatured alcohol irons are used, and found to fill the place admirably.

A long-handled, self-wringing mop for the veranda and porches will save many a weary half-hour; a bread-mixer will be found a most valuable time-saver when many loaves of bread have to be made each week;—indeed there are so many things now to be bought that mean as much to the housewife as his field machinery does to her husband.

If it is at all possible, she should have them. As a human being, she has a right to time for rest and recreation and reading. As a woman, she has a right to look young and attractive as long as she can, and above all things, to be an alert, interested, interesting personality, such as she can never be if she is permitted to degenerate into a mere drudge.

There are many more things that might be said, but for this time it is necessary to close. May we do so by quoting a bit of rhyme—one cannot call it poetry—written by Charles H. Meiers. It has a point.

### INEVITABLE.

There was a woman, and she was wise,  
She worked according to her size;  
Although her house was dust-infested,  
If she was tired she simply rested;  
Her neighbor worked from morn till  
night,  
Half frantically, to have things right;  
With broom and hose she'd dust and  
squirt,  
But now she's covered up with dirt.

### CHOOSING BOOKS FOR THE HOME.

Dear Junia,—I wonder if you will help me! Can you help me choose a library for myself; not a big one, you know, just something to read for the summer? That may sound very easy when one thinks of all the books on the market to-day, but I don't want to waste precious time with worthless books. I want books that will make me think, give me a greater insight into life, and a greater understanding of human nature. I want books that will educate, not merely amuse; not only a list for the summer, but for next winter, and the next, and so on,—history, biography, nature books, travel, and fiction. I also want a good magazine—one that will keep up with the times; also a magazine which will give good book reviews, and one good religious book.

I want to keep my mind busy with thoughts worth while. Of course, there is a man at the bottom of this. He has a splendid education, and I want to keep apace with him if possible. I hope I haven't taken up too much of your valuable time.

JEANETTE.

I have kept the secret well, haven't I, Jeanette?—Not even "County" appears to reveal the identity of you, or of that precious man in the background who is the inspiration of your new venture.

Frankly, your letter is most delightful. If more girls were anxious to improve themselves, as you propose to do, instead of putting all of their energies into fancywork and fripperies, there would be more happy marriages. A girl's beauty or winsomeness may hold a man for well over the honeymoon, but there must be companionship, too, if ennui is not to follow speedily. Mere beauty, with absolutely nothing behind it, soon palls; pretty clothes, if supported by nothing more substantial, make but an evanescent appeal; but an interesting mind is perennially attractive. I am glad you are to marry an educated man; and I hope the two of you will be—"chums," the very best wish, it seems to me, that I can wish for you. At all events, you are starting out in the right way.

Don't be pedantic, little girl, but make your mind just as rich as you can, and keep it as sweet and simple and unassuming as ever it was,—so you will be sure to be on the right way.

Now about the books,—it is just a little difficult to know where to advise you to begin, without knowing more of yourself, your tastes, and your education. Then there is such a world of books to choose from, and oneself has read so comparatively few of them. However, the following list may be suggestive:

In poetry and drama—you really should know something of some of Shakespeare's plays; something of Browning and Tennyson, the great Goethe, Shelley and Keats, Robert Burns, Coleridge and Wordsworth. Don't try to wade through the *Sahasas* of Wordsworth's inferior work, but don't overlook his "Tintern Abbey," "Intimations of the Immortality of the Soul," "Michael," "Happy Warrior," "Peel Castle," and a few others. You will be surprised to find how commonly Wordsworth is quoted from. . . If you want to know something of the more modern poets, read Kipling, Alfred Noyes, John Masefield, and Francis Thompson, with the Canadian poets, of whom you know.

Fiction.—First here may be put "Les Misérables," greatest of novels; Dickens' "David Copperfield," "Bleak House," and "Tale of Two Cities," will give you a start in the works of this popular novelist. For comparison, read Thackeray, whom many critics consider superior to Dickens,—"Vanity Fair," "Henry Esmond," and "Pendennis." You will like the Bronte books, and, possibly, those of Jane Austen; Blackmore's "Lorna Doone"; Lytton's "Last Days of Pompeii"; Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford"; Conan Doyle's "Micah Clarke," and "The White Company"; Barrie's "Little Minister," and "Window in Thrums"; George Eliot's