

The Farm Home

The Common School and the Common Kitchen.

By Mrs. S. T. RORER.

Statistics show that one-half of all the children born die before they reach the twenty-first year: one-third of these before they reach the twelfth month, nine out of every ten from preventable causes. This mortality is by no means necessary, and upon examination we find, in almost every instance, improper food the cause. One of our fallacies—if, for any reason the child is deprived of its natural food—its mother's milk—they immediately give it cow's milk. Now, the milk of the cow, being intended for the calf, necessarily is not fitted for the human being; the former reaches maturity in two, three, or, at the outside, four years, the human being at sixteen, seventeen, or perhaps twenty-one. Examine the milk of the cow and you will find all the necessary elements for the rapid growth of the calf. Examine the milk of the mother and you will find the necessary elements for the slower development of the infant. My good friend, Dr. Wiley, remarks, "This lack of wisdom can easily be proven by a visit to the grave-yards." These are things that must be taught in our common schools.

I will say a word about the size and arrangement of the common kitchen. The lack of money in no way interferes with the skill and knowledge of the housewife. Let the kitchen be small, with stove, sink and table in close proximity. A cabinet table, of course, is a convenience, as it holds all the necessary utensils and materials for the day's work, thus saving the running backwards and forwards from the closets, and perhaps a storeroom on the second or third floor. If one-half of the kitchen table is covered with zinc it saves scrubbing, and allows one to stand a hot pot down without injury to the table. The large half-sitting room kitchens are an abomination—things must be kept in another room out of sight. At the beginning of a meal miles are walked in collecting the necessary things before the actual preparation is begun. Far better for the housewife to have a room especially for cooking, all conveniences at hand, the meal quickly gotten and cleared away, that she may take her exercise or walking in the fresh open air. The furnishing of such a kitchen would not cost, exclusive of stove, over thirty dollars, as a good cabinet table in these days can be purchased for five or four and a half dollars. A good cooking school kitchen, where from twenty to twenty-five girls can be taken in class, should not cost over two hundred dollars; in fact, exclusive of the tables and stove, fifty dollars would

cover all necessary utensils. Economy in furnishing is as necessary as economy in the use of materials.

Removing Wall Paper.

A good method, perhaps the best known, to remove old wall paper is to place a boilerful of water in the room, drop in red-hot bricks or stones, and keep the room closed as long as steam is generated. Repeat until the paper is saturated with the steam. The work of removal must then be done very quickly, before the walls become dry. I once took off three layers by wetting the paper with boiling water (a great deal had to be scraped off with a knife), but the hot water injured the graining of the woodwork; it was dull looking ever after.

An experience regarding papering over old paper may be a warning to some young housekeeper. The paper-hanger, in response to protests, said, "The paper will look just as well if put on over the other," and proceeded to his work. When his attention was called to its lack of smoothness, he said, "It will be all right when it gets dry"; but it wasn't, and the wrinkles remain to blemish the work. Do not let any one persuade you to put new paper over the old. It should not be done, for hygienic reasons, if for no other.

The man or woman who will invent a safe and expeditious method of removing wall paper will have struck a bonanza, will be a benefactor of his race, and receive the everlasting gratitude of all housekeepers. We think that any acid strong enough to act on the paste would spot the paint if it came in contact with it.—*Orva.*

Some Odd Superstitions.

There are superstitions almost without limit, and their adherents are numerous. An authority has said that there is not a rite or a ceremony now practised and revered among us that is not descended from barbaric thought and usage. This is the only origin that can be assigned to the large majority of the superstitions still existing, and the reason for them are even more difficult to trace.

Here are some of the things collected by Miss Whitney:

If you spill salt at any time, throw some over your left shoulder, or you will have trouble. The salt thrown in this way, it is believed, goes into the eyes of the little devil who is lurking around to manufacture the trouble. Salt, it is thought, always averts evil, because it is not found in witches' kitchens.

If you are out and meet a flat-footed

man or woman, go right home and eat a good square meal and drink some water, or something dreadful will happen. It is believed evil spirits enter through the soles of flat-footed people.

In Italy, when a baby is born, the relatives of the child sit up with it the first night. They place a new broom across the threshold and a bag of salt with a napkin behind the door. This keeps the witches away, as to enter the room the witch has to count the straws in the broom, count the grains in the bag of salt and count the threads in the napkin. By the time she has done this the baby is baptized and the witch retires in disgust.

If a bald person dies, he will turn into a fish and remain in that form until he collects enough hair to make a wig. He can only collect one hair a month and at a certain phase of the moon. The superstition does not say what becomes of the man after he has collected enough hairs, but anyhow he stops being a fish.

This is a rhyme, common among children in Southern Maryland, supposed to ward off evil:

"God made man and man made money—
God made the bee and the bee made honey;
God made Satan and Satan made sin,
God made a little hole to put the Devil in."

You dig a hole in the ground, say this and then fill in the dirt, and it is very effective.

This one cures a horse of founders: "There was a man rode over the land with three worms in his hand. One black, one white, the other red, and in an hour all three were dead." Stand the horse with his head toward the sunrise; take your right hand and rub from the nose over the head and neck to the end of the tail while you say the words. Do this three times every two hours. Give some purgative medicine.

Easy Enough to Guess Age.

There was once a wise king who was awfully curious. He was possessed of a desire to know everything, and was continually asking questions. Indeed his thirst for knowledge carried him so far that he wanted to know the age of every person he met. But, being a king, he was exceedingly polite, and would resort to strategy to gain his ends.

One day there came to the court a gray-haired professor, who amused the king greatly. He told the monarch a number of things that he never knew before, and the king was delighted. But finally it came to the point when the ruler wanted to know the age of the professor, so he thought of a mathematical problem.

"Ahem?" said the king. "I have an interesting sum for you; it is a trial in mental arithmetic. Think of the