

worrying, importance. Writer after writer has attempted to probe the "cause," and, no doubt, many of them have touched it, or the combination producing it, closely, yet conditions do not improve; prices remain sky-high, people in poor or even moderate circumstances, find it increasingly difficult to make more than enough to keep body and soul together, while, at the same time, as anyone with eyes in his head must be able to see, the comparative few who have managed to get the ends of wires of one sort or another into their hands go on amassing wealth with an amazing rapidity. There is something queer and crooked about it all somewhere. This earth is productive enough to keep everyone who is willing to work, in comfort, and yet there never was a time when there were more distressingly poor on the one hand, and more luxuriously rich on the other. I suppose it will always be so, so long as there exists an appreciable proportion of people who are gigantically selfish, for, you know, the theory held by Tolstoi and others who have examined deeply into the question is that every dollar spent in useless luxury by a man or woman who refuses to do useful work of any kind—a parasite—means just so much less to someone who needs it for the necessities of life.

I don't suppose that any one who reads this is grindingly poor, yet, under present conditions, there are few who do not feel, more or less, the pinch of high prices. I hear much about them here in the city, from people who, apparently, lack but little, and I know from experience that, during the nine years which I have spent in this place, prices in nearly everything have gone up forty per cent. Salaries, as a rule, have not gone up in proportion, and so it is little wonder that people grumble. They have to keep "respectable" in appearance, yet they do not want to spend all they make for food and clothing. They have other and quite healthy ambitions—the wish to own, eventually, homes of their own, the hope of laying by enough to secure an independent old age.

Well, we can only hope that things will be worked out (and that right speedily) for the good of the greatest number. "Privilege" for the few at the expense of the many should have no place in a civilized land, and perhaps the persistent work of the little knot of good men and true—may their number be increased—who are steadily fighting this evil, may accomplish results sooner than we expect.

In the meantime, with prices as they are, the question is: What can we do with what we have to make a little money stretch over the most ground possible?—and really much may be accomplished along this line by the wise expenditure of thought as well as money.

To deal with the clothing question first: When buying clothes, as many wise women have found out, be very careful in the selection of material. Choose something that will look well, wear well, and that is so quiet in color that you will not tire of it quickly. It usually pays to buy a "good" piece. Cheap material soon looks shabby, and is seldom available for making over, hence, though the good piece may cost more to begin with, it proves to be the most economical in the end.

Next have the material chosen well made, with simple, graceful lines, and a minimum of trimming; it is the "lines," not the trimming, that count in the appearance of any dress or suit. Many of the city women are now making practically all of their own clothes, suits and all, and really, unless enlightened, one would not "know it." Of course, they buy good patterns, and take care to choose those that are simple enough to be easily managed; then they take infinite care in cutting, fitting, basting and pressing. Two women whom I know, who have no one about to help with the fitting, have bought adjustable fitting forms, and find them very satisfactory.

In the matter of hats and gloves, economy may be exercised by choosing those that will "go with" every suit or dress harmoniously, while there is real economy in possessing dainty collars.

Even an old and rather shabby dress may be transformed by a bit of immaculately white neckwear, with cuffs to match, while an old suit may give the effect of a new one if helped out by a dainty malines bow or crocheted jabot, a veil for the hat, good gloves, and well-polished shoes.

Often, too, the old dress, with the addition of a bit of new material, may be turned and made over into one new in line and effect, while old skirts may be metamorphosed into very good underskirts, and all underclothes given a double and treble lease of life by judicious patching. Hats, too, may be made over. Indeed, a milliner said to me once, "Never throw away an old hat until you see if anything can be done with it." Surprising transformations can be wrought by blocking and staining, nowadays, while velvets may be steamed, ribbons cleaned or re-dyed, and flowers touched up with tube paint and turpentine, in short, new trimmings produced from old.

ECONOMY IN COOKERY.

Coming to the table, one must needs pause, realizing the truth of the parody.

"High diddle, diddle,
The cook has a riddle,
With prices as high as the moon;
When her purse keeps small
And hungry folks all
Still eat at night, morning, and noon."

The very worst solution, however, is to cut down the food so much as to eliminate anything that is nourishing. That is no economy at all, for the family must be kept healthy and able for work, and it is better to spend money on food than on doctor-bills.

The problem, then, is to learn how to have the food as nourishing and as appetizing on less money.

Meats afford a ready answer to this question, so far as they go, for the cheapest cuts contain quite as much nutriment as the dearer ones; they only require different cooking to make them as appetizing. Cheap scraps, and all odds and ends of left-overs, for instance, may be put through a meat-chopper (it is a great economy to own a little meat-chopper), and made into croquettes, hash, or meat-pie; other cheap pieces may be transformed, by slow cooking, into appetizing stews; the cheaper roasts may be made delicious by pot-roasting, while round steak may be induced to become just as appetizing as porterhouse by searing it, adding a little water, and cooking slowly and steadily in a covered pan for three hours. Never make soup from a good piece of boiling beef, as the beef will be left tasteless, and comparatively useless as food; use soup-bones for the soup, putting them in the water when it is cold, so that every bit of nutriment may be extracted. Boiling beef should be plunged into boiling water and boiled for about two minutes to harden the outside so that the juices will be retained, then simmered until done. The water that is left will not be very rich, but may be saved for making soup with the addition of cracked soup-bones.

The housekeeper who wishes to economize in the right way must learn to realize the food-value of well-cooked beans, oatmeal, and corn meal, and will give these a frequent place, cooked in various ways, on the bill of fare. She must learn to use every scrap of left-overs, using old bread for stuffings, puddings, pan-cakes, and bread-sauce; odds and ends of vegetables, mixed, for salads, or meat-pies; and bits of porridge for muffins or "fried porridge." When eggs are sky-high, she must learn to make cakes and desserts that do not require them, but must supply their place, as important constituents of the daily fare, with something approaching them in nutritive value, though less in cost.

She must also learn to save every scrap of left-over fat for shortening, frying it out and clarifying it, and she must teach the family to be economical in the use of food. Children, for instance, should never be permitted to crumble up food and waste it just for amusement, and they should be taught that when eating bacon and bacon-gravy, or any other rich gravy, butter is not required.

Economize, then, but keep up a well-

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