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## Before House Cleaning

To make house-cleaning easy, I find a great deal depends on what you do before that time. I plan in March, or as soon thereafter as possible to do my white sewing. All the belongings in this line are looked over to see what is needed. Then I buy what muslin, bleached or unbleached, is wanted, stockings, handkerchiefs, etc. I cut up all old garments and make rolls of old white cloth, and the old towels and napkins that are past service are also made into rolls. When house-cleaning time comes, I know just where to find my cleaning cloths. If I need new covers on my sofa pillows I make them but do not put them on until my rooms are all cleaned. If any chairs need new covers, or windows new curtains, I also attend to them. Later on, as soon as a room is cleaned, you have your material right at hand to freshen the furnishings.

Don't forget the bedding. If anything needs washing, that should be done first; if any part is worn, repair; if the binding or lining is worn, put on new; if the ribbon on the flannel blanket is worn, rip it off and bind with light-colored chambray or gingham cut on the bias.

Pick up all odds and ends of cloth you don't want to piece, give to some one, or lay them away for use in work, or tear them into rags for fill and miss rugs or a carpet.

I look over all under-skirts and after putting in order, I examine all the home dresses. Besides some are hardly worth mending, but if they are good enough for house-cleaning, repair them, and they will save your good ones. After the home dresses are made good, don't fail to have a good supply of long wide-work aprons. Look over the best of your wardrobe, but don't attempt to work at those until after cleaning is done. You will now have plenty of time to think and plan what you will need to do, or, if you hire it to do, engage some one now to do it. Then all closets, drawers and boxes should be thoroughly cleaned and straightened.

When shopping, I try to think of the things I will need at house-cleaning time—tacks, paper for pantry shelves, new brooms, cans of paint for chairs and floors, not forgetting porch floors, paint brushes, stains for floor or furniture, etc. By this time I feel as though I was ready and wanted to begin. I take one room at a time, setting apart one clear day to hang out clothes, and another day for cleaning and airing all bedding.

## Home Paper Hanging

First, in selecting the paper, select a pattern that will match easily and that can be cut without much waste. This rule may be laid down, that large figures should be avoided in small rooms. A dark room or one on the north side of a house, may be brightened by using a warmer tone of paper, than in a room with a sunny exposure. A soft shade of yellow or deep cream is desirable to see day after day, and has the advantage of harmonizing well with nearly all colors of carpets, curtains, etc. Pale sage green or cold blue may be used with good effect in a room where the bright sunlight streams the greater part of the day. Striped paper increases the apparent height of the room. Never choose a pattern with wave-like lines or with a decided figure, for a bedroom. In case of sickness the invalid will almost involuntarily count the spots or follow the wriggling lines on the paper. A soft inorganic paper of one color is restful to the eye.

## TO PREPARE THE WALLS.

If their are more than two layers of paper on the walls they should be removed. Pull off as much of the old

paper as you can get off, then saturate what still sticks to the wall, with warm water; let it stand a half-hour then saturate it again, and the paper can be easily scraped off with a knife blade. Remove all nails and fill the holes with putty or else a paste made of plaster-Paris and cold water. Well-washed walls should be washed with water and strong vinegar. Use one quart of strong acid vinegar to two of water, apply the solution well around the casings, baseboards and corners.

As the paste is to be used cold, it would be best to make it the day before using. To every quart of well sifted flour, add a teaspoon of powdered alum, mix smooth with cold water, and pour in boiling water, stirring rapidly, till the paste is of the consistency of thick cream. Remove it from the stove as soon as it comes to a boiling point; strain it through a flour sieve or colander. If the paste is lumpier, the air will not all pass out from under the paper and as the paper is drying it will crack wherever there is an air bubble. Pour in enough cold water on top of the paste to prevent a skum from forming.

Do not undertake to paper a room without a helper. If you have no assistant change off work with a neighbor. A smooth board, the exact length and width of the paper will facilitate the spreading of the paste. If you have nothing better, an extension table will do nicely. Begin with the ceiling. Measure it the shortest way. The paper, ascertain how many strips will be required and cut and match them before spreading the paste. Cut the strips fully two inches longer than the measurement of the ceiling. This extra amount is to allow the paper to lap down an inch upon the walls at both sides, which is necessary to insure a neat finish when the border is put on.

Now draw a guiding line across the ceiling with a lead pencil as wide as the paper. Use a clean whitewash brush to spread the paste. If the paste is too thick to spread well, thin it out with cold water. Spread it evenly, being careful not to leave any dry spots of paper. Turn up two or three feet of the paper to make it easier to handle, with the pasted sides together; with your helper's aid, lift the paper to the ceiling, and when you find it matched press the edges of the paper on the wall, then let the helper turn back the folded end, and when it is all nicely matched, brush the rest of the paper to place with a clean white broom. If wrinkles appear, gently pull the paper loose, remove the wrinkles, and press the paper in place again. Air bubbles should be pricked with a pin to allow all the air to escape. If the seams of the paper are lapped from the light they will be less noticeable.

To hang the paper on the side walls, follow the instructions as given for the ceiling. Cut the strips long enough to extend down on the baseboard about an inch when the paper is applied. Press it down on the baseboard. Then loosen it and cut off the paper below the mark made by the baseboard, and press the paper to place again. This is the only way to get a neat finish to the baseboard.

## Helpful Hints

A good way to shrink cloth, before making it into garments, is to dampen a sheet thoroughly, spread it out, and laying the cloth on it, fold both over and over together, leaving it in sponge the way from one to three hours. Then hang it across a straight bar (not a clothes line or anything that sag), or iron it smoothly, being careful not to stretch it.

If the tea or coffee pot is discolored on the inside, boil it for a short time

in a strong solution of borax, and all the brightness will return.

Sometimes, after cleaning a spot off a garment with gasoline, an objectionable stain is left. This is because the stain was removed. To obviate this ring, lay over the place, a piece of clean white tissue paper, and press with a hot iron. This removes all traces of the stain.

For not too severe burns, nothing is better to apply than moistened tea leaves. This will soothe the inflammation and prevent a scar. (To be used only when burns are serious.—Editor).

## Improvements for the Kitchen

Every housewife will agree that the kitchen is the most important room in the house. Perfect ventilation is the first requirement of any up-to-date kitchen. Light comes a close second, and next in turn, and almost necessarily first, is heat. Do not paper the walls of the kitchen, if you can have them painted. They can be painted with a damp cloth, making a clean surface, without great demands on the strength, and without the annoying commotion and disarrangement caused by whitening and kalsomining every year or so.

The kitchen walls, ceiling, and shelves of all closets entering the kitchen should be painted. If days of enamel paints, such a process will cost but little, for surely there is some man about the house who can do the work, and if occasion demands, most women are equal to the task themselves. Painted shelves can be wiped off with a damp cloth, every day, if necessary. Paper in kitchen closets, is always a rendezvous for dust and vermin of all kinds.

## THE KITCHEN STOVE.

No matter what kind of stove or range is used, let it be kept, or as good as you can afford. This is true economy. Near the range, should stand the oil burner, if you use it. If you have a gas range, mounted on a table the height of the range, or placed upon a folding fastened out of the way, if desired. Keep the stove clean above all. They are easy to keep clean if attended to daily. The task is then not an objectionable one, and takes but a few minutes of time.

## LAUNDRY ARRANGEMENTS.

When the kitchen is also used as the laundry, if stationary tubs can be had, let them be placed next to the sink. They should have a good strong cover to form a table, when not in use. One of the needs of an ordinary farm house is a suitable and convenient place for the farm hands to wash as they come in from the fields. When a separate room is fitted up for the laundry, provision should be made in it, for the men, by adding a large sink and bench for their use.

## THE KITCHEN SINK.

The kitchen sink should be of cast iron, enameled or painted if possible. Have it good and generous in size, with as high a back as possible to protect the wall from the water which is certain to splash. At one end should be a long draining spout, which should be well grooved and inclined slightly towards the sink. Both tubs and sink should be well trapped.

Kitchen sinks should be treated frequently to a wash of hot water and ammonia or soda, to keep them free from deposits and grease. It is very important to secure the complete removal of all such matter well beyond the limits of the house before it is sent to the street. Lye or chloride of lime washed down the sink with hot, or boiling water, frequently is a good preventive for the accumulation of grease in the sink.