1921

A New Cure for the "Run-Down" Housewife

Carrie Plunkett
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol1/iss7/7

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
my expression were simply worn out jumping from hot to cold and gave up in despair, "in perfect relaxation" she murmured from behind.

I was about to drop off to sleep when I heard a whirr and a buzz and felt the velvet touch of a vibrator on my cheek. My great joy, at last, she turned off the switch, but only for a moment. Horror of horrors! A light suddenly glared at me. All of the lights—indigo, indigo, and X—were revealing what the years—the cruel years—had done to me. This was accompanied by low voiced instruction as to what I should have done; how, if I had been dull, I might have preserved the freshness that, presumably, I had in my youth.

I was prostrate.

Then, just as it had all seemed hopeless, life began to take on the sweet odors of violets and gardenias. Tiny little brushes smoothed my brows; slender little pencils touched my willing lips; pleasant lamb's wool left the bloom of youth in just the right spots.

I ventured to look. Could that person in the mirror be me? Twice the price would have been nothing as reward for this result. Apple blossoms, peaches, and cream, a skin you love to touch—that's me at last!

A New Cure for the "Run-Down" Housewife
The Rearrangement of the Kitchen and Its Equipment
By CARRIE PLUNKETT

T ANLAC, vegetable bitters, herbs of iron and other concoctions offered as remedies for backaches, strained shoulders, tired feet or whatever ails the "run down" housewife, has a new competitor in the field—the rearrangement of the kitchen and its equipment. Many steps are taken needlessly every day and many backs are weary at night, because of poorly arranged and inefficient kitchens. If you find yourself tired before your Saturday baking is over, look around your kitchen and see whether you have been carrying your cakes and cookies from the cabinet shelf clear across the room to the oven or if you have had the oven brought across the room to the cakes and cookies.

The housewife who is contemplating building or rebuilding has the best chance in the world to plan a well arranged kitchen. Here are a few salient points concerning the construction of the kitchen which it would be well for her to keep in mind.

If most of the cooking can be done in the forerooms, a west kitchen will be much cooler for summer. Weighted windows, high enough for a table or sink to be put under them, placed on two sides of the room will give good lighting and ventilation to carry away cooking odors.

Ten by twelve feet is a good size for a kitchen, where no help is employed. There should be two doors, one opening into the dining room and one to the outside of the house.

A very satisfactory wood trim for the kitchen is oak or hard maple, with a waxed finish. For the walls a smooth hard plaster, treated to two coats of paint, makes a finish that can be wiped clean with a darning-egg or sponge.

Linoleum of a quality, properly fitted to the room, has probably more points in its favor than any other covering or treatment for a kitchen floor. It is durable, easily cleaned and is easy to walk or stand on.

Artificial lights, one each for the stove, sink and work table might just as well be placed low enough to throw good light on the working surfaces as to be fastened up against the ceiling.

If built-in cupboards are to be had, a dust trap can be avoided by extending them from the floor to the ceiling. Shelves should be placed only at right heights for the worker to reach with comfort.

A sink of ample size with two drain boards is best located near a window (for good light) and near the cupboard where the dishes are to be kept. If the stove is located near the sink, a more compact working surface will lessen the number of needless steps.

A built-in refrigerator arranged for when the kitchen is planned, with an opening in the back, and a corresponding hole in the house wall will abolish the nuisance of the ice man's tracks on the freshly scrubbed floor.

The housewife who has her kitchen already built must, of course, take it as it is and arrange her equipment to save labor and time. In the arrangement of such equipment it is well to consider just what pieces are most used and in connection with each other. In a short consideration of one's own problems will show that ordinarily, work in the kitchen naturally divides itself into processes: first, preparing and serving the meals, and second, clearing away the left over food and dishes. Large equipment for each process grouped together into compact working surfaces makes fewer steps. In preparing, cooking and serving the meal, the pantry, ice box, table or kitchen cabinet, stove and serving table are used. The second process brings into use trays, serving table, sink, drain, dish closet, pantry and ice box. Diagrams 1 and 2 show good and poor arrangement of kitchen equipment. Diagram 1 shows the equipment arranged in such a way as to make a straight route from refrigerator to the dining room possible in the preparation of a meal. For the clearing away process the equipment is grouped to make necessary the fewest possible number of steps. When such an arrangement as it shown in diagram 2 is used, about one-third more walking is made necessary, due to the fact that no consideration is made for consecutive use of equipment.

Another important point, often overlooked, is that of grouping the small equipment or utensils near the places where they are to be used. It seems so easy at dish washing time to dump every thing into one drawer, but it is not so easy to fish each piece out again when it is needed—sometimes needed quickly.

It is convenient to have near the table or cabinet a can opener, cleaver, egg beater, scissors, rolling pin, bread knife, spatula, paring knife, measuring spoons,
measuring cup and bowls. Near the stove should be placed those utensils most needed for cooking, such as skimmer, pancake turner, long fork and large spoon. It is safe to assume that a colander, a strainer, a fork, a spoon and a knife will be needed near the serving table. Each small utensil needs to have a space and one which is not overcrowded.

Since a woman's back is not put together with hinges the height of working surfaces cannot be overlooked. The top of the stove and the work table, the bottom of the sink or any other surface upon which a task is performed should be of such a height from the floor as to enable one to work easily without having to stoop or raise one's arms unnecessarily.

If the working surface is too low, the worker must continually raise and lower the upper part of the body with each motion. It is too high she must lift her arms in such a way as to bring unnecessary strain upon the muscles. In a recent experiment made by the office of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture a woman was put in a calorimeter and made to wash dishes at a table eight inches too low for her height. The top of the table was found to be ten and seven-tenths calories of energy more per hour were required to do the same work at a table too low and four and nine-tenths more per hour at a table ten inches too high than at a table of the proper height for her. This experiment shows that needless energy and labor connected with kitchen tasks can be avoided by raising or lowering the working surfaces.

The table or stove can be raised with blocks of wood if they are too low. If however, the table and stove surface are already too high the table legs can be cut off and shorter legs can be secured for the stove. To get the sink the proper height, the plumber may have to be "scolded" since may just place a pan or pot at a certain height without considering the height of the one who is to work at it. If the surface high or low it seems only a matter to be decided as to which is the more important—the plumber's scalp or the housewife's back.

The following table has been worked out as the approximate heights for surfaces convenient for women of various heights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Height of working</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 feet 10 inches</td>
<td>27 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 feet</td>
<td>28 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 feet 2 inches</td>
<td>29 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 feet 4 inches</td>
<td>30 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 feet 6 inches</td>
<td>31 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 feet 8 inches</td>
<td>32 inches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many times the work could be done just as well while the worker is sitting, if she had only a stool in her kitchen, and often times she could use a comfortable chair if one were only near at hand. Window curtains light and attractive and a well kept house pot with geranium growing in it, will add much to the pleasure of the hours spent in the kitchen.

No set of rules for every kitchen and housewife can be put on paper. The worker must gradually work out in detail the arrangement best suited to her kitchen, and its equipment, and to her own likes and dislikes. But by keeping in mind the principles mentioned in this article and by constantly keeping alert to time and labor savers, she can make obsolete such trite expressions as the "overworked housewife" and "run down mother."

A Pattern in Hot Lunch Service for Rural Schools

By GRACE McILRATH

THAT THE serving of a hot lunch in a rural school may offer an opportunity to teach habits of cleanliness, sanitation and simple cookery, to the school children, has been proved by the Big Springs school in Cedar township, Linn county Iowa.

"This little school could well serve as a model for other Iowa rural schools," says Miss Margaret Baker, specialist in foods and nutrition, of the Agricultural Extension division of Iowa State College.

The twenty-five boys and girls enrolled in the Big Springs school are unusually enthusiastic, wide awake children. The Big Springs school itself situated in a generous acre of school ground is not unusual. It is the regulation one-room type school house with a large woodshed at one end and an artistic belfry (which is not exactly regulation), on top.

Mrs. Anne Schultz the teacher, with the help of Miss Hazel Spencer, the county home demonstration agent, organized the plan of serving hot lunches in the school in the fall of 1926. The project was put as much as possible in the hands of the children. The mothers of the children donated all the necessary small utensils and one mother expressed herself as being willing to donate a small oil stove. If the stove "didn't prove a fixture," The building of outside help was sufficient to overcome any difficulties and the children saw to it that the plan was not a "fizzle."

The woodshed was thoroly scrubbed and one end of it partitioned off with beaver board for the kitchen. The boys made and put in it all the necessary small utensils. They built a table and a door with a catch latch, and built a table which the girls covered with white oilcloth. A wide shelf served as a storage place for lunch pails and extra materials.

Miss Baker accompanied by the home demonstration agent visited this little school some months after the hot lunch plan was started. In telling of her visit she said, "We arrived at the Big Springs school just before noon. At exactly twelve o'clock Mrs. Schultz excused three pupils who went to the basins outside of the 'kitchen' door, washed and returned to their places bringing lunch pails and dishes for the hot food. Three others followed until all the small hands had returned to their places and all the lunch pails had been brought in.

Each child had a lunch cloth, which had been made in the school sewing class and which he spread out on his desk. The two cooks then brought in a piping dish of delicious creamed eggs and the children spread their cold lunches on the lunch cloths, received their serving of the creamed eggs and started eating orgy her. How cozy they all were and how mindful of their manners!

"When the meal was finished the dishwashers gathered up the soiled dishes and put the cloths away. While the children cleaned the dishes, two other girls washed the blackboard, and the basin as that was their duty for the day. By twelve forty the