Housecleaning

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By EDITH RUGGLES

H ouse cleaning! What memories those words bring to all of us! In younger days, before we were old enough to assist much in this semi-annual upheaval, we have visions of making a playground out of that part of the house that was being尘埃 blown over the clothesline for its seasonal beating. Mother enlisted every available member of the family in this crusade of soap suds, which lasted for several days or until every nook and cranny from the attic to the cellar had had its turn. In the meantime, the regular routine life of the family was completely upset. We ate when, where and what we could. Of course, every one was relieved when the ordeal was finished—but, oh, the lack of satisfaction on mother’s face as she proudly surveyed her spotless domain. The family at last settled down to a comfortable, normal existence until the process had to be begun again.

In the last few years housewives are beginning to find that it is possible to do away with that kind of house cleaning almost entirely. Why should we leave all the heavy work in cleaning for a few days in the year? Is it not reasonable that it would be better to do it out in smaller doses and distribute it throughout the rest of the year? In some countries several years ago it was quite common to have an annual washday. That seems ridiculous to us, but is not much more so than the present method of house cleaning in many homes. Of course, there is always a certain readjustment between seasons that is necessary. Winter's clothes and bedding have to be stored away and some housewives prefer to remove the winter drapes and put lighter ones up for the summer months. But these changes can be made gradually, leaving the family some place in which to be comfortable.

A monthly cleaning schedule has been found by many to be a very workable plan. By this method everything is gone over at least once a month. “Keep Clean, vs. Make a Mess” has been suggested as a good motto for cleaning. In this day of vacuum cleaners it is much easier for the housewife to live up to such a motto. Of course, cleaning is something that has to be repeated again and again and there is a certain drudgery about it that cannot entirely be eliminated. One is often reminded of the old story of cutting the head off the dragon; every time one head was cut off, two would spring up in its place. Nevertheless, it is possible to minimize the drudgery of cleaning by simplifying things about the house, doing away with bric-a-brac and unnecessary trinkets and by employing suitable methods, tools and reagents.

Suppose it is granted that we are going to distribute our heavy cleaning throughout the year and avoid fall and spring house cleaning as much as possible? Would it be better to spend three rooms that are situated fairly close together. We want to do so with the least time and the least energy possible. Is it not possible to vacuum each room separately and dust each room separately, or is it better to sweep all the rooms and then dust all the rooms? If time is the only thing to be considered, the latter is the better method. This is shown by Christine Frederick in the following time study taken from her book, “Household Engineering”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cleaning Task</th>
<th>Time Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparing rooms for sweeping</td>
<td>18 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeping rooms</td>
<td>21 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusting rooms</td>
<td>19 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time</td>
<td>58 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One handling of each tool.

However, if we are considering the peace of mind of the family, it may be better to clean one room at a time rather than to have the entire house in disorder at once.

We also hear much in these days about standardized practices. Factories employ experts who do nothing else but study the different processes and motions used by the workers and suggest ways of reducing the time and energy required. Gilbroth, one of our efficiency experts, says, “There is a sense that the waste in the world that equals the waste of ineffective, ill-directed human effort.” Why do you not become an efficiency expert for your job of homemaking and see how much improvement you can show in your methods of work? One difference with a job like cleaning is that it becomes so automatic that we forget that it can be improved by analysis and thought. Have you ever taken the job of cleaning a room—your living room, for example—and studied it with the intention of reducing its cost of time and energy to the limit? Do you have a certain routine of work as you do in making a cake or baking bread? Do you have any idea of the number of steps you walk in doing your cleaning each week? By the use of a pedometer one woman found that she walked seven miles each week in cleaning. But by a few improvements in her equipment and methods of work, she was able to reduce the distance to four miles. Housewives must realize that conservation of energy in the home is one of the important phases of housekeeping.

The idea of cleaning is to get the dirt collected and removed entirely from the room—this is the object of cleaning. Of course, it depends on the kind and finish of the wood. But the fundamental thing to remember in caring for any kind of floor is that the finish is put on to save wearing of the wood itself. This is the reason for applying wax, shellac or varnish to our floors and linoleums. The surface covering protects the foundation floor. Shellac or varnish is not as good a job, but dries much more quickly and is less expensive. A “flat” varnish is much more attractive and shows scratches less than the glossy, shiny type. Oil should never be used on waxed floors or varnished or shellacked floors with a top dressing of wax. They should have a daily dusting and as often as necessary a light polishing with liquid wax. Portions of the floor that receive the hardest use may have to be gone over with polish every day or two.

Although either an oil or wax mop may be used on a varnished or painted floor, never use both on the same floor. Decide which one you will use and then stick to it. Perhaps it is better to treat the dirtied finish when neither waxed nor varnished may be cleaned with warm water and a mild white soap. It has been found in washing white enameled woodwork that the streaks which are so hard to remove are caused by the water running down over the dirty unwashed surface. These streaks may be avoided if you begin at the floor and washes from the bottom up. This is quite contrary to the usual method employed by most homemakers.

There is one part of house cleaning that may be a great bugbear if attempted with the rest of the cleaning—but may be an interesting task if attempted some stormy day when there is plenty of time. This is the task of cleaning closets, drawers and boxes. One will find articles that have been misplaced and forgotten—clothes that can be renovated and trimmings that can be used. When the drawer has been emptied, it should be washed out with warm, clear water to which a few drops of household ammonia has been added. Never put the old paper back into the drawer for moth eggs may be hidden in the crevices.

In cleaning of closets, one should cross-examine every garment and see if it has claim to valuable space. If it needs mending before it can be worn, it should be put with the mending. If it is a garment that is never worn, but which perhaps could be used sometime, it should be stored away where it can be found when needed.

We have mentioned before the importance of having proper tools for cleaning. But what is just as important, is a place to keep these tools. We waste time and many steps by having our cleaning equipment scattered over the house. A cleaning closet should have a shelf on which such articles as scouring powder, soap, ammonia and furniture polish is kept. Brooms and brushes often wear from standing on their bristles than they do from use. They should be kept on hooks either on the walls or under the shelf by metal rings screwed into their handles. Oiled dust cloths should be kept in a roll in a special holder. By saving steps to have a cleaning closet on each floor with a duplicate set of

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is made to give them any amount desired. The funniest thing I noticed here was a sign which read, "No Smoking—This Means You and I." Our guide gave us a very interesting talk in his office, emphasizing the brands of goods carried, explaining to us their origin and what they are attempting to make them mean. The company has been organized since 1912 and the plant is owned entirely by retailers over the state and a few in Missouri and Minnesota. They have no traveling men and return this saving to the retailer in the form of lower prices. They do have promotion men selling stock, however.

We stopped to see Mr. Redfern, but were all so tired we could hardly stand to listen to him. He told us about the classes A, B, C of weights, and their regulations, and showed us thru his chemistry laboratory.

The return trip was peaceful, indeed, some sleeping, some eating, all resting after a strenuous but very interesting and happy day.

4-H Club Girls Give Scholarship
(Continued from page 5)

III. Responsibility of Applicant:
1. To stay in school for at least one quarter beginning March 24, 1926.
2. Apply for and fill out application blanks, returning same to 4-H Girls' Club Department, Iowa State College, Extension Service, Ames, Iowa.

IV. Responsibility of 4-H Club Department:
1. Judge applications impartially.
2. Announce successful applicant not later than March 1.
3. Present successful applicant with $100.00 on March 24.

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equipment. It really costs no more in the long run for each piece of equipment lasts just twice as long. Almost as valuable as the cleaning closet itself is the cleaning kit, in which to put the small things needed, when carrying them from one room to another.

Of course, each housewife has to decide for herself just what methods are best to use in her own case. And she can do this by taking the professional attitude toward her work, determining to make it efficient in every detail. By this we mean the methods that obtain the best results with the least expenditure of time, money and human energy. Surely that is a worthy goal toward which any housewife may strive!

Ethics of the Crew
(Continued from page 3)
Resourcefulness
Confidence
and under the lintel of Social Fitness, enter together into the Temple of Right Community Relationships, which has over its altar the inscription:
"Whatever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."