

KITCHEN REQUISITES.



THE kitchen requisites are so numerous, that we shall run the chance of getting quite bewildered with the multiplicity of the various articles, unless we first of all make an attempt to classify them. This may be conveniently done by forming them into three divisions—namely, the ironmongery, the brushes, and the turnery.

As I have before hinted, the furnishing of the kitchen involves a considerable outlay, for which there seems but little to show in comparison. To stock the kitchen of a big house with all the diverse appliances for cooking, and the other etcetera which would be necessary for a large establishment, if this were our task, there is no exaggeration in saying that £100 would only just cover the expense of such a proceeding.

But this consideration does not concern us—at any rate, I do not intend speaking of these matters on so large a scale as that. I am going to advise on the necessary purchases to be made for ordinary households. Let us run over the list, therefore, without further preamble; and as we proceed, I can throw out hints by the way. As heretofore in mentioning prices, so now, I shall not attempt to give the exact estimate of the pans and pails, but the approximate value only.

First, as to the pans. These have to be of various sizes; a set of four iron pans will suit ordinary requirements. Such a set will cost about 10s. An oval boiling-pot is most useful; also a fish-kettle and a steamer. The latter must be fitted to a large pan. If it cannot be fixed in one you have already chosen, then another must be bought for its special use. On these three articles of ironmongery a sovereign at least will have to be spent.

Copper and brass are better metals than iron for some purposes. For instance, in the making of jelly a small brass pan would be required, and a large one for the business of preserving fruits. Copper and brass are very much more expensive metals than iron or tin, as perhaps you may know. My eyes were opened to the fact in this way. I was once staying with a young bride; and one morning when she had ordered a jelly to be made, her cook told her that it was impossible to use the tin moulds which had been provided for such purposes—that a copper one must be procured. My friend was rather reluctant to expend any more money upon kitchen requisites; but, as the cook persisted, we set forth in the quest. After due deliberation upon the various shapes, a small one was selected, and the novice housekeeper drew forth her purse; but she started back in dismay when the shopman said, "One pound three shillings and sixpence, please, ma'am." We left the mould and the shop with many apologies, and felt ourselves wiser women than when we entered it.

But to return to the subject of pans. Three or four small saucepans will be required. Now, there are iron and tin and copper saucepans. Each of these are useful in their way, so I should advise you to buy of each kind. Those made of tin are the least expensive, but then they do not last so long. There is one great advantage in copper and brass, that they are very durable; but they should be kept quite clean, otherwise it is dangerous to cook in vessels made of these metals.

The kettles are always a primary thought—iron or block tin for the kitchen use, copper for the dining-room service. A wrought-iron kettle will cost double the one made of block tin, but then a kettle is always on duty in the kitchen, and therefore should be one of substance and strength. The cost of a copper kettle will be at least 15s.

A tea-tray for kitchen use, with tea and coffee pots, accompanied by their respective canisters, will cost about half-a-guinea. The useful frying-pan, gridiron, colander, and tin moulds may be estimated at 1s. 6d. each; the necessary toasting-fork, bread-grater, tin funnel, flour-dredger, pepper-box, and salt-cellar may be reckoned at sixpence apiece.

Then there is the meat-saw and meat-chopper, each costing half-a-crown; the basting-ladle, gravy-strainer, fish-slice, egg-slice, paste-jagger, and mincing-knife, at a shilling apiece; and a dozen patty-pans, which will be the same sum.

The dust-pan and slop-pail must not be forgotten, a couple of tin candlesticks and candle-box, a coal-hammer, shovel, and hod. These items will add up to a sovereign at least. Then there is a strong kitchen fender needed, together with poker and small shovel, and a couple of flat-irons and stand.

It will be readily conceded that all the above-mentioned articles are decidedly essential for all households; now let me mention a few additions which might be made—articles which are certainly useful in every kitchen, but not absolutely needful there.

A coffee-mill; a pestle and mortar, for which 6s. will have to be given; a weighing-machine, 15s.; a spice-box, 3s.; a set of tin dish-covers, £1 4s.

There are several other items which a cook would deem necessary if she were expected to serve up a variety of dishes for what is termed a "grand" dinner. For instance, there are special pans for the cooking of omelettes and cutlets, special kettles for the boiling of turbot and mackerel; and there are copper brazing-pans and copper stock-pots, which average £3 and £4 apiece; and there are the copper jelly-moulds, to which I have already adverted, and which are no doubt very much superior to those made of tin, because the pattern is more sharply defined, and therefore the outlines of the jelly or cream are more decidedly marked.

We now come to the cutlery. The use and abuse of knives is the universal lament of, and a grievous worry to, all housewives. The dusters make themselves wings and fly away, the knives cut and run!

For kitchen purposes, half-a-dozen horn-handled knives and forks should be provided: these may be had for 10s. the dozen. For dining-room use, at least a dozen large and a dozen small knives will be required. The price of those with ivory handles ranges from 30s. upwards. The handles which have round ends look better than those with square ends. With respect to carvers, one large set, and one of smaller size adapted for carving game, should be selected. Buck handles for carvers are stronger than ivory, but I allow that the former do not look as well when on the table. The prices vary from 7s. upwards. Remember that you cannot make a greater mistake than that of buying cheap cutlery. A knife which makes much ado about cutting is an aggravating companion, and much money may be spent in having blunt knives ground and sharpened, a discipline which common knives continually need. I have in my possession a set of knives bought thirty years ago, and used constantly during that time; these knives are always sharp, and are a continual rebuke to many others which have been purchased during that interval.

We must try and prevent the cook from using the silver spoons by giving her some metal ones—two or three iron spoons, two or three metal ones, and half-a-dozen metal tea-spoons, all of which may be bought for a couple of shillings.

And now for the second division—*i.e.*, the brushes. Quite a regiment of brushes is indispensable to cleanliness. We *must* have a hair broom, and a carpet-brush, and a short-handled double stair-brush, and a set of stove-brushes, and a set of shoe-brushes, and a hearth-brush, and a scrubbing-brush, and a plate-brush.

When these are paid for, you must not expect to receive any change out of a sovereign. If you try and economise by spending less, the bristles and hairs will leave their sockets, and you will have a number of useless backs and handles fit for nothing but firewood.

Our third and last division now remains, and that is what is termed the turnery—articles made of wood. A chopping-board, a paste-board and rolling-pin, and a flour-tub—no house can well do without these things: on the lowest computation, 10s. will have to be expended. A lemon-squeezer and a vegetable presser are often wanted: 2s. will buy the two articles. Hair sieves of various sizes are useful in most kitchens, and are not expensive items. A knife-board of course we must have, and a knife-box; a dish-tub, glass-tub, wooden pail, and clothes-horse—these will run away with a golden guinea; 16s. has to be expended on a butler's-tray and stand, if it is to be strong and useful; a plate-rack will cost half that sum.

A housemaid's-box tends to tidiness, and two or three wooden spoons and a soap-box come under the head of "requisites."

In this department a basket can be bought for the silver; one with three divisions, and properly lined with baize, will cost five or six shillings. There is also to be thought of the basket lined with tin, which is for the purpose of holding the plates when removed from table.

A couple of Windsor chairs and a table may be considered as indispensable, and also a clock. And now I think we have enumerated all in the lengthy list—no, we have forgotten the cork-screw. E. C.

LODGERS AND LODGINGS.

A SKETCH FROM EXPERIENCE.

HAVING lived in lodgings many years, some comfortable ones and some quite the reverse, and having during that time made the acquaintance of many, both lodgers and lodging-house keepers, I am perhaps better able than most people to express an opinion about them. Whilst my experience has taught me that lodging-house keepers are not necessarily rapacious and greedy, it has shown me also that neither are they as a rule benevolent beings, who let apartments with the sole object of making their fellow-creatures happy. The position of mistress in a house entirely or partially occupied by lodgers is almost always a trying one, and it is very certain that the comfort or discomfort to be enjoyed or endured by those whom circumstances oblige to live in apartments, may be added to or decreased quite as much by the temper and disposition of the lodger as by those of the mistress. But perhaps I had better narrate a little of my own experience.

The person with whom I first lived was named Mrs. Jorkins. She was a widow, and was mediocre in every respect; I fancy she had a good deal of difficulty in

making both ends meet, and if she occasionally swelled the bills, she had a great many temptations to do so. Her house was let to three different sets of lodgers. I had the first floor—bed-room and sitting-room; the two rooms above were taken by an old gentleman, who in the house always went by the name of "the mysterious party;" and the two rooms underneath were occupied by an ever-varying succession of young gentlemen "engaged in the City," who were at once the life and the nuisance of the establishment.

The "mysterious party" used to consist of the "mysterious parties"—that is, of an old gentleman and his wife, who had lived in the rooms for some years, and led the quietest of lives. They had never had an acquaintance to visit them, nor received a letter or a message of any sort, since they came. They had their own furniture—very handsome furniture it was—kept their own rooms, cooked their own food, and carefully avoided the slightest acquaintance with any one in the house. They had every appearance of respectability; their rent was paid punctually, and often before it was due. It was folded in a piece of