

the dishes, and it wasn't in mortal power to get the stickiness off the sides of it. I pretended to be satisfied, but I heard her say to the waiter afterward that she should give warning soon if mamma didn't make me keep to my own place, and not be poking my nose into the kitchen. I am not the least bit afraid of her ladyship, though, and if you only will tell me how it ought to be done, I'll have that old sink made as clean as yours."

"I know considerable more about keeping it clean than making it so," says Aunt Betsey.

"Would a sink-scraper be any advantage?" I modestly suggest. "I see them for sale at the hardware stores."

"You do?" Aunt Betsey says in surprise. "Then I give it up. New York must be an awful dirty town if the sinks have to be scraped; but if there is such a thing I suppose it's a kind of hoe, and I should advise you, under the circumstances, Miss Jennie, to buy one, and set that shiftless, dirty, hired girl of yours to hoeing out your sink. It's only fair that she should have the trouble of cleaning out her own work. Then I should—"

"What were you going to say?" asks Jennie.

"Well, I don't know as it's my business, but if it was my hired girl after she'd got the sink hoed out to the best of her ability then she should have her walking papers, and be free to hunt up another situation where they liked dirt better nor I do. Then after I'd got rid of her I'd take a scrubbing brush and plenty of soap and sand, and go to work with a will on that sink till I made it shine, and then I'd take care of it myself, and not trust it to girls."

"You mustn't think all girls are like this one of Jennie's," says I, thinking of the two who have lived so long with me that they seem like a part of my own family, and whose patience and industry have long been matters of envy and admiration to me.

"No," protests Jennie, "this cook is the most untidy one we have ever had, and mamma does not expect to keep her; but I'll see that she gets that sink in order before she leaves, and when her successor takes hold I'll make her keep it as clean as Miss Betsey's if she will tell me how to do it."

"There's no secret about it," says Aunt Betsey, graciously; "every time I wash my dishes I wash my sink with the dish-water, and then wipe it off with the rinsing water; by managing it that way it never gets real dirty. I always wash out my dish-cloths," she continues, seeing that the girls are really anxious to get information, "every time I use them. When I have real dirty dishes, pots and pans and such things to wash up, I use what I call a pot cloth for them, and save the regular dishcloth for the glass and china. Now here's my pot cloth hanging on this nail under the sink; it's very coarse and strong, you see, but clean and dry. I wash it out every time it's used, same as the other, and I always hang them both up to dry, for if there's anything that will make dish-cloths sour and unwholesome, it's throwing them down in a wet lump, or stuffing them into a corner to wait till they're wanted again."

"Do you wash out the towels every time they are used?" asks Sophie Mapes, who has been all through a most attentive observer.

"Only the one I wipe pots and kettles on," is the answer; "the others don't need it, for all the dishes that's wiped on them is rinsed in clean hot water, same as you saw me do them a little while ago. I keep a fine towel a-purpose for glass and silver, and one a little coarser for china, and a heavy one made of bagging, for the pots and kettles. I make that one very small, so it will wash easy, and most every day I give it a boil in one of the sauce-pans, with just a mite of washing soda in the water.

Some folks don't hold to wiping pots and kettles, but dries them off on the stove, but I wipe all mine inside and out, and then set them on the back of the stove to get an extra dry off, because if you put iron or tin away with one mite of dampness on it, there'll be rusty spots eating holes in it and giving bad tastes to the next victuals that's cooked. I have heard of folks putting frying-pans away without washing, only just dreening off the grease and rubbing with a piece of paper. They pretend it's better for the iron. All I've got to say about such slack ways is, that I'd starve before I'd eat anything cooked in one of their frying-pans."

It seems too bad, but just as Aunt Betsey begins to wax eloquent, and, apropos to frying-pans, is about to give us reminiscences of a family of Perkinses she used to know, we have to gather ourselves together to prepare for our walk to the landing to meet the steamer, which I know by bitter experience will never have the good taste to wait for anybody.

So we bid our quaint hostess adieu, take lingering, longing glances at the lovely old china, stay another moment to drink Aunt Betsey's good health in creamy country milk, pick a sage leaf apiece from the garden bed by the porch, and get started at last, discoursing as we walk briskly along, the unexampled neatness of our hospitable hostess, whose kindness we resolve to requite in a measure by sending a little remembrance of our visit as soon as we can decide what form of gift would find best acceptance.

## A Woman Farmer.

ONE of the most successful of the Pennsylvania farmers is a woman, the wife of Rev. Abel C. Thomas, one of the former lights of the Universalist Church. For many years her husband has been an invalid, a victim to nervous prostration from over-brain work. He was ordered to the country, and compelled to relinquish all active participation in private as well as public affairs.

Mrs. Thomas had always lived in the city—had no acquaintance with country life, but she found a small farm of twenty acres, in the vernal grass region of Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, which she purchased at a low figure, and out of which she has created the Paradise, which one must see in order to understand. The house is approached by a beautiful avenue of elms, which was in existence when the purchase was made; but the place was otherwise unimproved. Her first thought was how to use her limited resources to the best advantage. She decided that a farm of twenty acres could not compete with the larger ones, in the matter of quantity, and that she must therefore trust to the quality of her products to secure pecuniary reward. She also wisely concluded that it would be of little use to devote herself to one branch of agriculture, such as wheat, stock, or poultry raising, because one department helps another, and, singly, could not be made to pay by any methods that she was acquainted with. Her first effort was to secure good stock, Alderney cows, light Brahma fowls, and to bring whatever she undertook to cultivate up to the highest point of perfection that the utmost care, cleanliness, and personal supervision could secure. Her success she does not look upon as anything extraordinary, but it is certainly worth recording. Her average of butter is 800 pounds per annum from four Alderney cows, and

this sells from fifty cents to one dollar per pound in the Philadelphia market. The average number of chickens is from 700 to 800 per annum, and these sell at a dollar each, alive. Eggs are sold by the sitting, from thirteen to fifteen, a dollar and a half each lot, for breeding purposes, and she can sell all she can raise. She sold three calves during the past season for fifty dollars each, and her wheat as much beyond the market price, for seedling. This latter result was wholly unlooked for by herself. The crop was very large, measuring two hundred bushels to the acre almost from the first, due entirely to the excellence of the seed and the extraordinary care bestowed upon it. No weeds were permitted—and plenty of manure, and abundance of salt stimulated its growth. The miller to whom it was submitted when ripened offered a higher price than he would give to any of her neighbors, and this fact becoming known, gave her wheat such a reputation that it has ever since been in demand for seed by the farmers in the vicinity, and has actually raised the standard of flour coming from that district.

Her hen-house cost five hundred dollars, and is perfectly arranged, and fitted up for the comfort of her feathered family. The upper room is lined with boxes for hatching, and there are also dust-baths, and a plentiful supply of oyster-shells, bone-dust, and whatever else is necessary to the production of chickens on scientific principles. Carbolic acid is put into the whitewash, with which the walls are cleansed and covered, and sulphur into the nests. It is a curious sight to see a dozen or more hens, all sitting at once upon their nests, and watch the general uprising, the craning of the necks, and the universal expression of satisfaction when a faint little "twee-twee" announces that one little chick has broken its shell. Mrs. Thomas does not go very extensively into bee culture, but she has twenty-five hives which add from one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars to her annual receipts, and is "all profit" after the first outlay.

Mrs. Thomas is well descended. She is a great great-granddaughter of John Robinson of Leyden, the pastor of the "Mayflower," and her great-grandmother was Elizabeth Newcombe, granddaughter of Governor Bradford. In addition to her own family of four children, she has brought up thirteen orphans of German, Scotch, Irish, and Indian blood, and been actively engaged in church and society work, as secretary of a national association, chairman of the tract committee, and other responsible positions. She still preserves a fine matronly appearance, which expresses to the merest stranger the goodness of her heart, the strength and soundness of her head. Her great gift of sympathy is the undoubted secret of her success. Everything animate and inanimate gravitates toward her, and is held by the mere force of natural cohesion. Her household is maintained on a scale of the utmost liberality. Instead of stinting herself, her family, and her dependants, they have the best, and in the greatest abundance. Ducks and turkeys are reared exclusively for family consumption. The garden is cultivated with the same object. No fruit is sold—all is used or given away. Rich milk and cream find their place on the table at every meal, and a package of the sweet butter, of a quality not to be found in the ordinary market, not unfrequently finds its way to the homes of her friends.

Her hobby, the work to which she willingly devotes herself aside from her farm and the daily and nightly care of her helpless husband, is the translation of the waifs of the city to the homes of the country, and their regeneration and healthful growth through the beneficent influence of rural life. A woman like this is greater than all the Cæsars.