

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Langbein Schiller Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Claudius Schilling Kralik Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Raabe Gibbon Tschechow  
Gerstäcker Raabe Vulpus  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Gleim  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Morgenstern Goedicke  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Kleist  
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Mörike Musil  
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus  
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke  
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht  
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz  
von Ossietzky Marx vom Stein Lawrence Irving  
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# **The Skilful Cook A Practical Manual of Modern Experience**

Mary Harrison

# Imprint

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TO  
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS  
THE PRINCESS CHRISTIAN

WHOSE INTEREST IN EVERY GOOD AND USEFUL WORK  
HAS SO JUSTLY ENDEARED HER TO ALL  
CLASSES OF THIS NATION

THIS WORK

IS

BY HER GRACIOUS PERMISSION

Most Respectfully Dedicated

BY HER

HUMBLE AND OBEDIENT SERVANT

MARY HARRISON



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# 1 THE SKILFUL COOK.



## INTRODUCTION.

The importance of every woman having a thorough knowledge of domestic economy cannot be too strongly insisted on. The false refinement which, of late years, has considered an acquaintance with domestic matters to be only suitable for servants, has been fraught with the most disastrous consequences. This may seem strong language, but it is not too strong. All sanitary reformers know well enough that it is in the power of many women to prevent very many deaths, and an incalculable amount of misery and vice. Speaking of sanitary reform, the late Canon Kingsley says:—‘Women can do in that work what men cannot. The private correspondence of women, private conversation, private example of ladies, above all of married women, of mothers of families, may do what no legislation can.’ And again, in the same speech, delivered on behalf of the Ladies’ Sanitary Association, he says:—‘Ah! would to God that some man had the pictorial eloquence to put before the mothers of England the mass of preventable agony of mind and body which exists in England, year after year: and would that some man had the logical eloquence to make them understand that it is in their power, in the power of the mothers and wives of the higher classes—I will not say to stop it all, God only knows that—but to stop, as I believe, three-fourths of it.’

This may seem to some, perhaps, too serious an introduction to a cookery book; but it is my earnest wish that my book may not be simply a collection of recipes for cooks to refer to, but a real help to those women who, recognising the importance of good cookery in sanitary reform, are doing their utmost (as I know many are) to acquire that knowledge, and are thereby making the lives of those about them brighter and happier; and are also by their examples doing an amount of good that they themselves scarcely dream of. I have been told more than once by those benevolently interested in the working classes that with instruction to ladies on cookery they had no sympathy, and they seemed to think that it would be better if lessons on the subject were given exclusively to the poor. They forget that the wives of the working men are women who have most of them been domestic servants, and that what they learn in their situations, and what habits they there acquire, they take for

*good* or *evil* into their own homes; and in this way an ignorant careless mistress may be doing an infinitude of harm to her sister women in a lower position than herself. On the other hand, a mistress who understands thoroughly the management of a house, by wisely training her servants in habits of order and industry, by teaching them what they do not know and have had no opportunity of learning about hygiene or the laws of health, may be—in fact cannot help being—a blessing indirectly to many homes.

I believe that the working classes must be taught in this way if they are to be taught at all. I have myself, over and over again, tried to benefit my poorer sisters by giving them free lessons on food and cookery; and although I invariably find a few who are very grateful for such instruction, the majority, I imagine, never trouble to put in practice what they have been taught. Their habits have been already formed, and it is not easy for them to alter them. But it is a significant fact that those who do value the lessons are generally respectable hardworking women, who have held good situations under good mistresses.

I have also heard it very ignorantly objected by some that by teaching ladies how to cook, you are taking the bread out of the servants' mouths. This is, indeed, the conclusion of a shallow mind; for with equal justice and good sense, it might be said that the owner of any large business was taking the bread out of his *employés'* mouths because he happened to be acquainted with all the details of his own business, and was able to see that those in his employment attended to their duties properly. But this, I suppose, everyone will admit, that the owner of any business ignorant of the management and details of it, would not unlikely one day find himself without any business to manage. And if this is true with regard to men's businesses, is it not equally so with regard to women's?

I have the greatest sympathy with servants, and would be the last to injure them in any way. A good servant is a treasure: and good work always deserves good wages. But the more a mistress knows of household work herself, the more is she likely to appreciate a servant who honestly and conscientiously performs her duties; and by understanding their difficulties, the more consideration is she likely to show to those in her employ.

But there are some ladies to whom a knowledge of domestic economy ought to be especially invaluable—namely, those whose means are so limited that they cannot afford to engage servants who have had any great experience, and, therefore, who keep only what is called a general servant, a term which often means a woman or 4 girl who will undertake to do everything, but who has only the vaguest notions of how anything should be done. They, poor things, have had no opportunity of learning in the homes from which they came. But it will be well for the poor 'General' if her mistress can teach and train her; for she will then leave her situation with knowledge and habits that will make her a valuable and useful woman, and be of the greatest service to her all her life.

It is, however, quite surprising to see the rough way in which some people allow themselves to be served, and the muddle in which they prefer to live rather than do anything themselves that they consider menial; as if an untidy house, slovenly servants, badly cooked and coarsely served food, are not likely to do much more to lower their self-respect than any amount of so-called drudgery. 'A gentlewoman,' it has been said, 'never lowers herself by doing that which would make her feel less a gentlewoman if left undone.'

How much healthier and happier, too, many girls would be, if, instead of going out in all weathers, day after day, to earn a miserable pittance in any such employment as daily governesses, they would do some of the lighter housework, cooking, &c., at home. By being able to do with one servant instead of two, they would save probably more than they could earn in other ways, besides being much stronger from the exercise thus taken. But too many girls are, unfortunately, imbued with the vulgar notion that work is not genteel. What a Moloch this gentility has been and still is! What a number of human sacrifices are continually placed at its shrine, and what puppets its votaries become! Mr. Smiles says: "There is a dreadful ambition abroad for being "genteel." We keep up appearances too often at the expense of honesty, and though we may not be rich, yet we must *seem* to be so. We must be "respectable," though only in the meanest sense—in mere vulgar outward show. We have not the courage to go patiently onward in the condition of life in which it has pleased God to call us, but must needs live in some fashionable state to which we ridiculously please to call our-

selves; and all to gratify the vanity of that unsubstantial genteel world of which we form a part.'

It would effect a moral revolution if women would only look at matters in the true light. How much crime and misery may be traced to mismanaged unattractive homes! How many deaths to the ignorance of hygiene! How much intemperance to the physical depression caused by badly cooked food! Let us hope that the refinement, falsely so called, which is only another name for vanity, laziness, and selfishness, may soon give way to the true refinement of heart and mind which considers nothing too menial which will benefit others; nothing too common that will add to the happiness of our fellow-creatures.

If we women could earnestly and courageously endeavour to do the duty nearest to us, remembering that all honest work, of whatever kind, has been for ever ennobled by the great Founder of our Faith, so should we be, one in one way and one in another, 'helping to move (to quote Dean Goulburn) the wheels of the great world system whose revolutions are bringing on the kingdom of Christ.' 'To be good and to be useful,' as Canon Kingsley says, 'are the two objects for which we were sent into this world.'

## HINTS TO YOUNG HOUSEKEEPERS.

She looketh well to the ways of her household.

*Proverbs of Solomon.*

Take care that you know definitely what sum you can afford to spend on your household expenses, and make it a point of conscience never to exceed it. Market with ready money, if possible; but, if it is more convenient to pay by the month, or quarter, never make that an excuse for letting your bills mount up to double what you can afford to pay. With accounts, carefully kept, it is quite possible to regulate the expenditure to the income.

Never order things at random, but inquire the price of everything before purchasing. Take every pains to know how to judge of the quality of meat, groceries, &c., so that you may not be imposed on. Never be ashamed to say you cannot afford to have this or that. To be poor may be a misfortune, but it is not a fault; and, indeed, to be rich is often a far greater misfortune. The discipline of poverty, and the self-denial it involves, will often strengthen a character which the luxury of riches would enervate.

Cultivate sufficient independence of character to enable you to form your household, and regulate your expenses according to your *own* means, and not according to the income of your neighbours. What does it matter if some may sneer at your thread-bare carpets and frugal fare? The approval of your own conscience is of far more importance than the friendship of the vulgar-minded. Above all things keep your accounts most strictly. Without this you are like a mariner without a compass, or chart, you don't know where you are or what is your position, and you will find yourself, before long, on the rocks of debt and difficulty. Extravagant housekeeping has been the cause of the most serious evils; and, if persisted in, will be sure, in time, to wreck the peace and happiness of yourself and family.

Extravagance is, no doubt, often the result of mere thoughtlessness, but that does not mend matters. There is as much evil wrought

by want of thought as by want of heart. If it is true that there is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous, it is equally true that there is but one step between folly and wickedness. Therefore, all young housekeepers ought to give earnest attention to the management of their affairs, for certainly in these matters the 'wise woman buildeth her house, while the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.'

## FOOD AND DIET.

The human body is constantly wearing out. With every movement, every breath drawn, there is some waste of its substance. To repair this waste, and, in the case of children, to provide material for their growth, a certain amount of food should be taken daily. The food taken should consist of such qualities as will make flesh and muscle; such as will also keep up the heat of the body, and give force, or the power of movement. These foods must contain a certain quantity of liquid, and the salts necessary to keep the blood pure.

### Table of Foods.

<b>Flesh-forming or Nitrogenous.</b>	<b>Heat-giving or Carbonaceous.</b>
<i>Examples</i> — Meat	<i>Examples</i> — Butter
Poultry	Suet
Fish	Dripping
Game	And fat of all kinds
Eggs	Sugar in whatever form
Cheese	Starch, which is contained in all vegetables
Flour	
Oatmeal	
Barley	
Rice	
Peas	
Beans	
Lentils	

The foods under the head of flesh-formers, although classed as flesh-formers, are really compound foods. They contain some heat-giving as well as flesh-forming properties.

The heat-giving foods, on the contrary, are all simple foods. Life could not be sustained on any one of them alone, whatever quantity

might be taken. These facts are sufficient to show the necessity of a mixed diet. Professor Church says in his lectures on this subject: 'Our food must be palatable, that we may eat it with relish, and get the greatest nourishment from it. The flavour and texture of food, its taste, in fact, stimulates the production of those secretions—such as the saliva and the gastric juice—by the action of which the food is digested or dissolved, and becomes finally a part of the body, or is *assimilated*. As food, then, must be relished it is desirable that it should be varied in character—it should neither be restricted to vegetable products on the one hand, nor to animal substances (including milk and eggs) on the other. By due admixture of these, and by varying, occasionally, the kind of vegetable or meat taken, or the modes of cooking adopted, the necessary constituents of a diet are furnished more cheaply, and at the same time do more efficiently their proper work. Now, if we were to confine ourselves to wheaten bread, we should be obliged to eat in order to obtain our daily supply of albuminoids, or 'flesh-formers,' nearly 4 lb.—an amount that would give us nearly twice as much of the starchy matters which should accompany the albuminoids—or, in other words, it would supply not more than the necessary daily allowance of *nitrogen*, but almost twice the necessary daily allowance of *carbon*. Now animal food is generally richer in albuminoid, or nitrogenous constituents, than vegetable food; so, by mixing lean meat with our bread, we may get a food in which the constituents correspond better to our requirements; for 2 lb. of bread may be substituted by 12 oz. of meat, and yet all the necessary carbon as well as nitrogen be thereby supplied. As such a substitution is often too expensive, owing to the 10 high price of meat—cheese, which is twice as rich in nitrogenous matters (that is flesh-formers) as butchers' meat, may be, and constantly is, employed as a complete diet, and for persons in health, doing hard bodily work, it affords suitable nourishment. Even some vegetable products, rich in nitrogen, as haricot beans, may be used in the same way as meat or cheese, and for the same purpose.' [1]

It is a pity that the value of haricot beans, peas, lentils, and oatmeal is not more generally known. One writer says that there is as much nourishment in 1 lb. of either of these as in 3 lb. of lean meat; and in a lecture on the same subject, another writer states that in three farthings' worth of oatmeal there is as much nourishment as in

a mutton chop. These are certainly facts which should be known, especially by people of limited means. Macaroni and semolina are also valuable foods; they are prepared from the most nutritious part of the wheat grain. Rice and maize are deficient in flesh-forming properties, but useful as heat-giving foods; so are, also, tapioca, cornflour, and sago.

Potatoes and fresh vegetables contain but little nourishment. They must not, however, be despised on that account, as they are most valuable additions to our daily diet on account of the potash and other salts which they contain. These vegetables help to keep the blood pure. The anti-scorbutic properties of the potato are so great, that since its introduction into England leprosy is said to have entirely disappeared; neither is scurvy the scourge it was formerly.

The food taken daily should be in proportion to the work done. A labouring man, for example, working hard each day, would require such foods as liver and bacon, steak, bullock's heart, beans, peas, cheese, hard-boiled eggs, &c.; foods, in fact, that would not be too easily digested. Hard work causes the food to be assimilated more readily. A too easily digested fare would cause a constant feeling of hunger. 11 For anyone, on the contrary, leading a sedentary life, the food taken could not be too digestible. In that case, mutton, plainly cooked chicken, soles, milk puddings, and lightly boiled eggs should be the kind of viands chosen.

Children should have plain wholesome fare. Oatmeal and bread are both excellent foods for them. The lime they contain hardens their bones. The bread should be made from seconds flour, which contains more flesh-forming and mineral matter than the whiter and more sifted kinds.

Children should also have plenty of good milk. This is of the greatest importance, especially for the first months of a child's life. Milk is the only perfect food, and contains all that is necessary to sustain healthy life. It is also the only food a child can properly digest, until it cuts its teeth. The improper feeding of children is the great cause of infant mortality. When it becomes advisable to add to milk other foods, they should be nutritious and well cooked. Fine oatmeal or baked flour are, perhaps, the two best. Dr. Fothergill says: 'Children fed on the food of their seniors, or rich cake, and

crammed with sweeties, do not as a rule thrive well. They cannot compare favourably with children fed on oatmeal, maize, and milk. Oatmeal is recovering its position as a nursery food, after its temporary banishment. Oatmeal porridge is the food *par excellence* of the infants born north of the Trent, or was, at least, and stalwart people were the results.'

There is no doubt oatmeal is an excellent food, not for children only, but for everyone, especially for those who work hard. It is much to be regretted that it is not more universally used. The English, as a rule, eat too much animal food; and do not give sufficient attention to the proper preparation of vegetables.

Oatmeal water is considered a most strengthening beverage, and is used by men in foundries when beer and fermented liquors would be found too heating.

12 Of alcoholic drinks, Mr. Buckmaster says (echoing the opinion of eminent physiologists): 'Beer, wine, and spirits are never to be regarded as foods. Their popular use is entirely due to their stimulating properties. They contain no nitrogen, and are therefore not flesh-formers, nor can they add anything to the wasting tissues. All stimulants act by increasing, for a time, the vitality of the body; but this activity is always followed by depression in proportion to the previous excitement. Tea and coffee do, to some extent, prevent waste; but their value as foods depends mainly on the sugar and milk taken with them; and their use, *instead of food*, is almost as hurtful as intoxicating drinks. Cocoa differs very much from either tea or coffee, since it is a nutritious liquid food.'

In a lecture on the action of alcohol upon health, Sir Andrew Clark says of health: 'That it is a state which cannot be benefited by alcohol in any degree.' He also states: 'It is capable of proof, beyond all possibility of question, that alcohol, *in ordinary circumstances*, *not only does not help work, but is a serious hindrance of work.*'

These facts are so important, and ought to be so universally known, that it is to be hoped before long the chemistry of food will occupy the place it should as one of the most necessary branches of everyone's education.