

**A HANDBOOK OF
COOKERY. A SERIES OF
PRACTICAL LESSONS**

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A Handbook of Cookery. A Series of Practical Lessons by Matilda Lees Dods

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A Series of Practical Lessons.

BY

MATILDA LEES DODS,

DIPLÔMÉE OF THE SOUTH KENSINGTON SCHOOL OF COOKERY.



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EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

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PREFACE.

THE question will naturally be asked, in connection with this volume, Why is such a work required at all? Is there not already an abundance of books devoted to and exhausting the various branches of the subject, from the monograph which discusses all the points and possibilities of cold mutton, to the "Complete Housewife," whose "common-sense" suggestions and elaborate instructions range over all possible topics, from the currying of a lobster to the management of a husband?

To such a criticism we should reply, that cookery is now accepted as both a science and an art. As a science it is, of course, subject to all the laws of natural development; while as an art it can also lay claim to the privileges of continued inspiration; and the disciples of to-day need not admit that all wisdom has died with the prophets who have taught in the past. In sober earnest, there has been, during the past few years, a much more general recognition of the fact that the work of cooking—upon which depends so much of the comfort and, in fact, the happiness of existence—cannot be successfully carried on in a hap-hazard or in a "hit-or-miss" fashion. The interests imperilled are too serious and the

results of failures too grave. It requires and demands careful, persistent study, and should utilize also all possible ingenuity and creative power that can be pressed into service. Originality of conception, thoroughness of knowledge, and precision of method may be said to be as important for the practice of cookery as for the practice of medicine; and it is very evident that the more fully these are called into play for the former, the greater the prospect of getting rid altogether of the latter.

The due recognition, during the past decade, of the proper position of this branch of human knowledge has led to the establishment of institutions planned to give instruction in the principles of cooking, and to further its higher development as a fine art; and during the next few years we hope to see the number of such institutions largely increased. Having obtained a first class diploma from the Kensington School of Cookery, with this in my possession, and a definite purpose before me of doing what was in my power to further the knowledge of my fellow-women and the comfort of my fellow-men, I could no longer feel that my life was aimless, even though my work should have no higher "range" than that of the kitchen. In course of my work with classes I have found that there was quite a general demand for a book that should embody, with somewhat more comprehensiveness and completeness of detail than was possible in any single course of lectures, the whole range of instruction, and should give the particular application of the general principles,—a book that should be, not a mere stereotyped schedule of dinners, suppers, and breakfasts, nor a depressing list of semi-intelligible recipes, but one that should present a comprehensive insight into the general rules for the intelligent preparation of food, and at the same time clearly describe the several means and processes of

arriving at desired results. In response to such demand this volume has been prepared. Nothing has been included in it of which the practical worth has not been thoroughly tested; and it is believed that the examples have been so selected that, although of necessity limited in number, they demonstrate the whole theory and practice of the culinary art, and will make the reader familiar with the most approved methods and the latest attainments therein.

The purpose of our work is now set forth, although, if the whole story were told, it might be proper to show how the original cook-book grew from an onion, the veritable

*" Piece of chalet
Which she never forgot."*

But this touches the romance of the whole matter, without which nothing, however prosaic, is complete. With such prose and such suggestions of romance as belong to my subject, these pages are now submitted to the interpretation of those to whom my book is most affectionately dedicated—the world-wide sisterhood of housewives and their husbands—trusting that through its instrumentality all may be convinced that, while Heaven still furnishes the food, the Promethean fire of knowledge has redeemed the cooks.

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