

TO
THE ENGLISH GIRLS

TO WHOM
FATE MAY ASSIGN THE TASK OF BEING
HOUSE-MOTHERS

IN
"INDIA'S FOREIGN STRAND"
THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS

DEDICATED

BY
G. G. AND F. A. S.

THE
COMPLETE INDIAN HOUSEKEEPER
AND COOK

*GIVING THE DUTIES OF MISTRESS AND SERVANTS
THE
GENERAL MANAGEMENT OF THE HOUSE
AND
PRACTICAL RECIPES FOR COOKING IN ALL ITS
BRANCHES*

BY
TWO TWENTY YEARS' RESIDENTS

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PREFACE.

THIS book, it is hoped, will meet the very generally felt want for a practical guide to young housekeepers in India. A large proportion of English ladies in this country come to it newly married, to begin a new life, and take up new responsibilities under absolutely new conditions.

Few, indeed, have had any practical experience of housekeeping of any sort or kind; whilst those who have, find themselves almost as much at sea as their more ignorant sisters. How can it be otherwise, when the familiar landmarks are no longer visible, and, amid the crowd of idle, unintelligible servants, there seems not one to carry on the usual routine of household work, which in England follows as a matter of course.

The kitchen is a black hole, the pantry a sink. The only servant who will condescend to tidy up is a skulking savage with a reed broom; whilst pervading all things broods the stifling, enervating, atmosphere of custom, against which energy beats itself unavailingly, as against a feather bed.

The authors themselves know what it is to look round on a



large Indian household, seeing that all things are wrong, all things slovenly, yet feeling paralysed by sheer inexperience in the attempt to find a remedy.

It is in the hopes of supplying a little experience at second-hand that this book has been written. In it an attempt has been made to assimilate the duties of each servant to those of his or her English compeer, and thus to show the new-comer where the fault lies, if fault exists. Also, as briefly as possible, to point out bad habits which are sure to be met with, and suggest such remedies as the authors' experience has proved to be successful. And here it may be remarked, that the very possession of the book may be held to presuppose some desire on the part of the possessor to emulate the wife who does her husband good, and not evil, all the days of her life, by looking well to the ways of her household.

One can scarcely begin a book of this sort by an essay on ethics; therefore the authors premise a certain sense of duty, and the educated refinement which refuses to eat more than the necessary peck of dirt.

In the Cookery Book, which follows as a second part, the authors have again worked from practical experience, not only of the recipes themselves, but also of the exigencies of Indian life in the present day. The age of the Nabobs is past, the Pagoda tree extinct as the dodo; and, though butcher's meat remains cheap, and most of the necessities of life are reasonable, the rupee at one and fourpence and a fraction makes economy a grave question for

most Indian officials. With young mouths at home eating beef-steaks at a rupee and a quarter per pound, the number of those sadly depreciated images of Her Gracious Majesty which remain for *pater* and *materfamilias* is often but small.

So in the recipes the authors have given as wide a berth as possible to "Europe stores;" to everything, in short, which makes a perusal of the daily rate of exchange a terror and a despair.

In order to simplify the training of servants as far as possible, the authors have arranged to issue the various chapters on the duties of servants in the form of pamphlets in Urdu and Hindi. The price of each pamphlet will be from one to two annas; and it is believed that they will be found of great use, as, even when the servants cannot read, they can get some one to read to them.

The Cookery Book will be simultaneously published in Urdu at the lowest possible price.

F. A. S.

G. G.