FINE CROPS SURE

Farmers in Western Canada Jubilant at Prospect.

Splendid Winter Weather Has Put the Naturally Fertile Land in Splendid Condition, and Bountiful Yields Are Assured.

"What a delightful winter we have had," is an expression that could be heard almost anywhere when the topic of the weather became the subject of conversation. Not only in the Middle West and "down east" could it be heard, but also in the Far West, up in the Canadian West. There the same remarkable features that brought forth a wonderful winter existed. Reports from all parts of the country, from famed Medicine Hat in Alberta to Winnipeg in Manitoba, indicate that all through the winter season very little cold weather was experienced. In December, we read that golf playing had put into the discard all ice sports, that farmers were caught "red-handed" plowing their fields. In January, the Alberta yeoman got out his tractor and in his shirt sleeves was seen preparing ground for the 1921 crop. During February, in Saskatchewan, one farmer harrowed fifty acres and planted the seed. "Why, yes, of course, in March," said an Iowa farmer, who had just heard from his son, who was looking after the Western Canadian farm, "my boy writes me they had some snow and a few cold dips, but what did that matter? The cattle and the horses came through the winter in better condition than they looked three or four months ago. Grass was plentiful on the prairies, the stubble was rich and valuable as food, and the straw stacks and groves proved ample for shelter."

Spring is now fully upon the Western Canada farmer, his machinery is all in shape for a spring's work, and he is looking forward to an excellent crop year. Last fall there was a splendid lot of moisture that permeated the ground sufficiently to leave a perfect seed bed. Indications are now that the crop will go in in the condition required for successful germination. Then, with the lengthened days of May and June, the many hours of sunshine that they bring, accompanied by showers of rain, and with a soil of which there is none richer nor more generous there will be seen preparing for a ripening harvest the hundreds of thousands of acres of wheat, oats, barley, rye, alfalfa and corn that will make the hearts of the Western Canada farmers swell with pride as they reasonably look forward to an abundant harvest.

There is a great deal that can be said in favor of the climate of Western Canada. The most important is that those who live there, and have lived in other countries, prefer it to any they have experienced elsewhere. It is true the winters as a rule are colder than are those in countries lying much farther south, but it is also true that they are tempered by a dryness of the atmosphere that makes a lower temperature preferable to that several degrees higher where greater humidity prevails. Enervation and listlessness are unknown; the air is bracing, but the cold is not penetrating. Then the summers and the autumns—they could not be more enjoyable.—Advertisement.

An Old Favorite.

"Professor," said Mrs. Newrich to the distinguished musician who had been engaged to entertain her guests, "what was that lovely selection you played just now?"

"That, madam," he answered, "was an improvisation."

"Ah, yes, I remember now. I knew it was an old favorite of mine, but I could not think of the name of it for the moment."—Boston Transcript.

Denied the Charge.

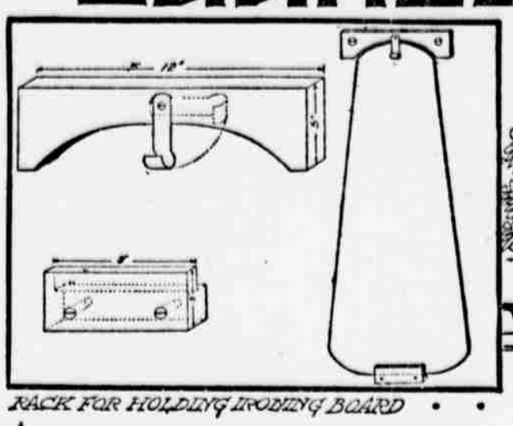
Kind Lady—You should brace up, my poor man. Remember what you owe to society.

Hobo—I don't owe society nuthin', lady. What do yer t'ink I've been doin'—playin' bridge?—Boston Transcript.

Slim Equipment.

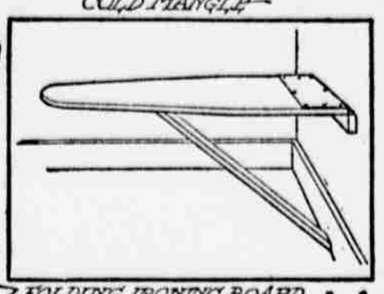
She—"I never try to parade my virtues." He—"No, it needs at least two to make a parade."

Equipment for Home Laundering



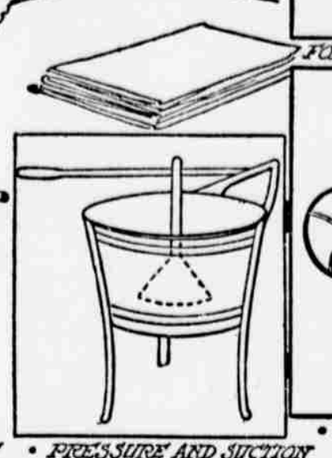
RACK FOR HOLDING IRONING BOARD

COLD MANGLE

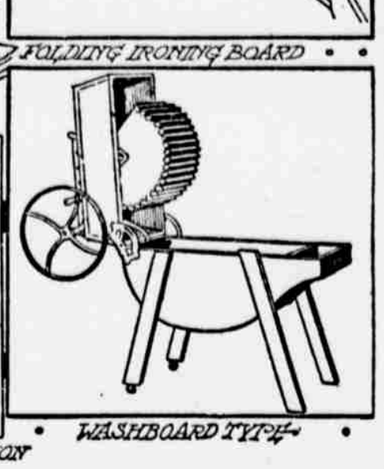


IRONING BOARD

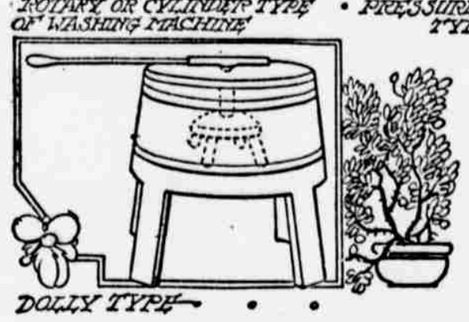
ROTARY OR CYLINDER TYPE OF WASHING MACHINE



PRESSURE AND SUCTION TYPE



WASHBOARD TYPE



DOLLY TYPE

GOOD equipment in the laundry room is as important as right methods in laundry work. Both decrease the labor, shorten the time, and assist in producing better results. Equipment need not be expensive, but it should be chosen and placed from the point of view of service and for the comfort of the worker.

The working surface of nearly all laundry equipment is usually set too low, and the woman operating it is so out of balance that she is soon fatigued. Little of the washing process is done in the bottom of the tub, and the working height is about half-way up the side. For the average worker the top rim of the tub should be 36 inches from the floor; in all cases the tubs should be placed so that the worker does not stoop from the shoulders but bends at the hips. A portable washtub may be easily raised or lowered to the right height. If the top of the washboard is too high, it may be lowered by cutting off part of the legs. The ironing table or board should be low enough so that force from the shoulder can be easily applied; 31 inches is a good average height. Where no special room is provided for the laundry and there are no set tubs, a portable bench of the correct height and size is convenient.

A wooden tub is difficult to keep in good condition. If kept dry it is likely to shrink and fall apart; if kept moist enough to prevent shrinking, it is likely to become water-soaked and slimy, and may have a disagreeable odor. A portable, galvanized-iron tub is fairly light, durable and easy to keep clean, but may corrode. A fiber tub is still lighter, is easily kept clean, and is durable if left dry, but is more expensive than an iron tub. Any portable tub may have a hole bored in it and a plug inserted so that water may be drained from it without lifting the tub. Hot and cold water can be piped to a portable tub as well as to a more expensive stationary one.

For set tubs, wood, which is now little used, has the same qualities as for portable ones. Soapstone and similar materials are cheaper than porcelain, but because of their dark color it is more difficult to be sure that they are clean. Porcelain or enameled-iron tubs are heavily glazed and do not rust or absorb grease. Both white and yellow porcelain tubs are on the market; the latter are cheaper but the color may make it hard to tell when the clothes are white. A home laundry is most often equipped with two tubs, but when there is no washing machine a third tub saves much handling of the clothes.

Washboards reduce the work of cleaning a garment but are somewhat hard on the clothes. A glass board, although more easily broken, is preferable to a metal one, because the corrugations are rounded and the friction on the clothes is less. When the surface of a washboard is broken it should not be used. Washboards should always be put away dry, so that they do not warp.

Wringers save labor, make the clothes much dryer and are less destructive to fabrics than hand wringing. To prevent buttons from being torn off by a wringer, fold them into the garment and hold it flat. A reversible wringer is much more useful than a one-way wringer if two or more tubs are used. To keep a wringer in good condition it should be oiled with good machine oil and the pressure screws should be loosened when it is not in use. When the pressure is put on again, both screws should be turned at once; then the pressure is more likely to be even. The rollers of a wringer may be cleaned with a cloth moistened with two or three drops of kerosene; but, since kerosene dissolves rubber, the rollers should be washed with soap and water as soon as the discoloration disappears.

A tin boiler costs less than any other, but is not particularly durable. It must be well dried after using. A tin boiler with a copper bottom is more durable, conveys heat better, and is worth the additional cost. A boiler made entirely of copper is expensive, but is the most durable of all. Some elaborate laundry equipments have stationary boilers, which save much lifting.

Some helpful washing devices are on the market. One is a perforated funnel, made to place in a wash boiler, which works on the same principle as a coffee percolator, spraying the clothes and increasing the circulation of the water. The funnel-on-a-stick washer creates a partial vacuum and makes it possible to wash more clothes at a time and also to wash very soiled clothing without immersing the hands or scrubbing.

Washing machines, whether operated by hand or by motor, are efficient because they do more work in a given time and do much of it without direct and constant supervision. While wooden-tub machines are cheaper than those with metal tubs, they are likely to dry and then leak, if kept in a heated room; it is better to store them in a cellar, a barn, or a shed, or on a porch. Leaving a wet sponge in the machine helps to provide moisture. Metal tubs must be protected against rust, and the working parts of all machines must be kept properly oiled.

While there are two hundred or more washing machines on the market, they may all be grouped under five heads:

(1) Machines of the "dolly" type have a device like a short-legged stool that revolves in a tub, usually of wood, and cleans the clothes by drawing them through the soapy water, first one way and then the other. In some cases there are corrugated boards around the side of the tub. There is special danger of tearing the clothes if too many are put in at one time.

(2) The "washboard" type of machine, like the "dolly," usually has a wooden tub and rubs the clothes between corrugated boards. Both these types of machines use friction and so are better suited for washing heavy, coarse clothing than for more delicate fabrics.

(3) The "cylinder" type of machine has a revolving perforated cylinder that holds the clothes and rolls barrel-fashion in an outer cylinder, which holds the soap and water. The better makes of this type reverse the action, because a continual revolving of clothes in one direction twists them, thus preventing the water from being so easily forced through them and increasing the work of removing the dirt.

(4) The oscillating type of machine throws the clothes forward and backward in an elongated box. Both cylinder and oscillating machines are good for general home use, because in them the clothes are not pulled nor rubbed.

(5) The vacuum type of machine is equipped with cones or funnels that first press down on the clothes and then lift, producing suction. They are sometimes spoken of as the "pressure and suction" type.

Motors—All these types of machines may be operated by hand or by water, gasoline, or electric motor. While a motor will increase the price of the washing machine, it will save much time and labor.

A water-motor washing machine may require a considerable flow of water. If a water flow of about 40 pounds pressure to the square inch is available, a water motor may be used; but may not be economical if the water is metered. There are some new machines that run on lower pressure.

A gasoline engine, such as is used to cut fodder, grind corn, or pump water, may be used to run the washing machine. The belts by which the power is transmitted should be kept taut. Every person who runs a sewing machine knows how much power is wasted in treading when the belt is loose, and the principle is the same with the gasoline engine.

Electric machines may be purchased with motors using either a direct or an alternating current. Before the housekeeper orders her machine she must find out which kind of current is available, because even in different parts of the same city various kinds of electric current may be used.

Plugs are standardized; therefore if the connection is to be made through an electric-light plug, no special attachment will be needed. In building a new house in which electric machines are to be used, it is wise to place plugs in the wall and not to depend upon the lighting system. Some localities give two service systems, one for lights and a cheaper one for operating electrical appliances.

In order to determine whether, from the money standpoint, it is cheaper to wash by hand or to buy and operate a washing machine, the cost of the two methods may be reckoned as follows: Divide the cost of the machine by the number of years it will probably be used. To the result add the cost of operation (about 5 cents an hour multiplied by the number of hours it will be used in a year, plus about $1.50 per year for oil and minor repairs). To reckon the cost of hand work, calculate the amount paid a laundress during the year for actual washing (not starching and ironing) and add the yearly cost of any meals and car fare given her; or, if no laundress is hired, multiply the number of hours you give to this work yearly by the price which a laundress receives per hour in your neighborhood.

The starching outfit consists of a pan or a pail, a tablespoon, a teaspoon, a measuring cup and a strainer. All of these may be borrowed from the kitchen, but a duplicate set is inexpensive and time is saved by having it at hand.

An ironing board should stand firmly. A board with its broad end hinged to the wall is very convenient. Directions for making such a folding ironing board are given in another bulletin of this series, which also tells how to make a rack to hold a portable ironing board on the wall or the inside of a closet door. If the smaller end is square, the board is useful for ironing shirts and takes the place of the old-fashioned bosom board.

An ironing board should be padded so that it has spring, but not so that it is like a cushion; if padded too much, the iron will sink down and mark the garment that is being ironed. Heavy felt or the double-faced cotton flannel such as is used on a dining table, makes an especially good pad for an ironing board, but is expensive. The width of this material will cover the length of the board. The pad should be wide enough to turn over the sides, and about two inches should be allowed on all sides for shrinkage. Two thicknesses of the new material will be enough for a board, but after the pad has been washed or flattened by ironing three thicknesses will give better results. Old blankets and mattress pads may be used, but by the time they are worn enough to be discarded for use on the bed they are usually too matted to be of great service on the ironing board.

The cover on the ironing board may be made of old sheets, but is better made of new heavy unbleached sheeting 60 inches wide. This allows the width of the muslin to form the length of the cover. The cover should be hemmed and four pieces of tape firmly sewed to each side so that it can be easily put on and taken off. Ready-made covers laced together through eyelets are also convenient. There are various spring devices for holding the cover together, but some of them are likely to tear it.

A sheet of asbestos placed under the iron rest and the paper or cloth used for cleaning the iron, protects the muslin cover from scorching. Some boards have a piece of tin about eight inches wide tacked across the end on which the iron is to stand.

If old-fashioned flatirons are used, at least three should be provided. This allows a change of iron often enough to rest the hand and keep the irons hot. Those weighing from six to eight pounds are easier to use than lighter ones, because a heavy iron makes it unnecessary to exert so much pressure. It is convenient to have one light-weight iron for thin goods and a sharp-pointed one for ruffles and gathers.

Electric, gas, gasoline and alcohol irons save the worker from standing near a fire and from walking back and forth to change irons. They also make it possible for her to sit while ironing plain articles, and thus make the work easier. At first thought the price of these irons may seem prohibitive, but the convenience is so great that the initial cost and the cost of operating may be justifiable.

In buying an electric iron, choose one made by a recognized electrical supply company. This iron should be guaranteed for a year. The voltage of an electric iron is marked on the back of it and is, in most cases, 110. The housekeeper must choose an iron that corresponds in voltage with the home current, because if more current is forced through than the wires are able to carry, it will be "burned out." The electric wires that lead from the iron should be watched; if any break appears in the covering it can easily be mended with adhesive tape while the current is off. These breaks should not remain uncared for, because of the danger of shock and fire.

Gas, gasoline and alcohol irons burn fuel within the iron. Care must be used with the last two because, if the container leaks, fire will result. With a gas iron the tubing connecting the gas is likely to knot and twist; therefore it is wise to choose the so-called flexible tubing, either the kind wound with wire, or, better still, that with a flexible metal core covered with several layers of protective material.

A mangle or ironing machine is of great help; if one cannot afford both that and a washing machine, one should get the latter first, because there are more clothes to wash than flat pieces to iron. Only sheets, pillowcases, table linen and underwear without buttons or ruffles should be put through a mangle. A mangle should be chosen with reference to the size of the articles to be ironed. If it is too small, folding articles many times makes progress slow, and the repeated ironing on the folds causes much wear. Mangles may be hand-driven or attached to a motor, and may be heated by gas, kerosene, gasoline, or electricity. A cold mangle, however, may give much service; it smooths only by pressure, giving no gloss nor glaze, and does not sterilize.

Difficulty Is Surmounted.

Mr. Jenkins—I think a woman should not spend more on clothes than on rent.

Mrs. Jenkins—Well, then we shall have to pay a higher rent.

Children's handkerchiefs often look hopeless when they come to the laundry. Wash with good soap, rinse in water blued with Red Cross Ball Blue.

Vocation Transferred.

"You're writing poetry, doctor?" "Yes; to kill time." "Haven't you any patients any more?"