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PRAYER FOR THE KITCHEN

Lord of all pots and pans and things, since
I've no time to be
A Saint by doing lovely things, or watching
late with Thee,
Or dreaming in the dawnlight, or storming
Heaven's gates,
Make me a saint by getting meals, and wash-
ing up the plates.

Although I must have Martha's hands, I
have a Mary mind;
And when I black the boots and shoes, Thy
sandals, Lord, I find.
I think of how they trod the earth, what
time I scrub the floor;
Accept this meditation, Lord, I haven't
time for more.

Warm all the kitchen with Thy love, and
light it with Thy peace;
Forgive me all my worrying, and make
all grumbling cease.
Thou Who didst love to give men food, in
room, or by the sea,
Accept this service that I do—I do it unto
Thee.

—M. K. H.

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smell of new bread embrace me and there on
the wall is the old clock whose tick-tock has
told me the time since I was a child.

Our kitchen faces the south and it has five
big windows to make it a place of light and
joy. Immediately on the left is the sink and
the drying cupboard. Then there is a doorway
to a little hall from which doors lead into the
larder, the parlour, the attic staircase and the
large cupboard. In the hall there are the hooks
for our clothes.

Warmth is provided in our kitchen by the
large brick stove, for baking as well, which
stands half-way along the north side. Our
smaller cooker is next to the sink and in the
corner the door to the bedroom.

The solid furniture of the kitchen living
room was mostly made by my father. My hus-
band has added to it with the help of the vil-
lage carpenter. In the corner there is an angle
cupboard and in front of one of the windows
a table for the radio and newspapers. By the
end wall there stands a high, ancient dresser
and in another corner is a wooden sofa which
can also be made into a bed. There is a chest
for logs and a short bench near the stove. Be-
tween the windows is a long refectory table
with benches and chairs. A huge bench, which
is as long as the gable wall, has a shine from
the wear of a great many years. In one corner
there is a tool cupboard and beside it, in front
of the window, a sewing machine. On the wall
near the door are places for the churn and the
separator. A rocking chair completes the

simple, pale green furniture of our living
room.

I sit down on the rocking chair when the
day is just turning into evening and let my
thoughts wander and my feet rest. My
mother's old table harp is hanging on the
beamed wall. Its strings have been broken
and untouched for many years, for the player
has gone. The present day hustle and bustle
have penetrated everywhere. The art of our
ancestors, harp playing, is becoming rare even
here in the old Kalevala playing fields. It
must be ready-made music, by just switching
on the radio.

This frantic hurry drives also the small-
holder's wife. Hurry from the cowshed to the
kitchen, from the kitchen to the laundry-hut,
or to the fields. It compels the planning of
new methods to increase the effectiveness of
work. When electricity was introduced into
our village a few years ago, we had it put
in, too, and though the expense seemed ex-
orbitant then, we have managed to meet it.
Now we have an electric pump to pump water
to the cowshed. From there we carry water
in buckets to the kitchen. We even have a hot
plate, to my joy. Running water and plumb-
ing to the house is a distant but ever present
dream. We have no cellar yet, so the food has
to be kept in a small larder and in a store
house. Fortunately there are blocks of ice to
help in the dairy.

A new building for the steam-bath was built
last autumn. There also we do the laundry
and we have a washing machine which we
turn by hand.

I am especially grateful for electricity. Now
we can at least plan new improvements for
the housekeeping. When we carry them out
is another matter. Everything is very expen-
sive for there is very little money in a small-
holder's home and what there is has to be
spent very cautiously. The telephone would
also be a boon as we live so far away from
centres of communication, but there is not
one in the whole village yet.

These thoughts come to my mind as I sit
in the rocking chair. Fuchias and pelargonias
are in bloom on the window sill. I get up and
give them water, also to the pink rose and
climbing ivy in the parlour. I peep into the
bedroom where I can hear the even breathing
of the children. I tidy up their toys in their
own play corner. The sandpit on a sheltered
spot near the verandah has been very popular
for there the children like to play on sunny
days. There also it is easy for a mother to keep
an eye on them.

Continuous work from early morning to late
night is the way of life in all country homes.
On the wall of my home there is a picture with
the words: "Pray and Work." It is an heir-
loom and I hope to be able to leave it as an
inheritance to my children. It is an apt text
for a farmer's home and brings blessing to
those who follow it.

—From "The Countrywoman"