Rubber Stoppers.

Few housekeepers realize or appreciate the value of rubber stoppers for bottles or small jars. Volatile liquids, such as ammonia, benzine, and ether, if poured into bottles fitted with rubber stoppers, and acids which destroy ordinary corks have no effect on rubber. Catsups, syrups, cordials, and even preserves may be kept safely in bottles or jars without sealing if rubber stoppers are used and firmly pressed in.

To Clean Decanters.

Chopped potato-parings or tea-leaves, with plenty of soapy water, will clean your decanters and give them shining countenances.

To Keep Bread Moist.

It seems to be a paradox, but it is none the less a fact, that the smaller the amount of moisture there is in bread when it is baked, the longer the bread will keep moist. Therefore, if you wish to have bread retain its moisture, see that the dough is stiff when it is set for the last rising. The larger the proportion of flour to that of moisture in the dough, the longer the bread will keep moist. After the bread is baked and cold, put it in a tin box or an earthen jar with a close cover, and keep it carefully covered. Bread thus made and kept from the air in a cool place will keep moist for a week.

Coffee without Cream.

Cream is usually considered an essential ingredient in making good coffee, but experience has taught that an excellent beverage may be made from the Arabian berry without the aid of cream. French cooks are famous for the excellence of their coffee, and its superiority is caused by the use of hot milk. The coffee is made so strong that one part of the liquor requires the addition of two parts of hot milk, and the use of this large proportion of milk renders the addition of cream unnecessary, as it makes the coffee sufficiently rich without it. Any housekeeper who has plenty of milk need not worry about a lack of cream when she wishes to make good coffee.

Simmering Versus Boiling.

The difference between simmering and boiling in the preparation of food is not as well understood as it should be. Vegetables should be put into water that is boiling rapidly, so that the boiling process may be retarded as little as possible. Steeping in warm water makes them tough and watery, and in many cases injures their flavor and color. Meats, on the other hand, should be allowed to simmer as slowly as possible, as this has a tendency to make them tender and to retain the valuable juices. Rapid boiling toughens meat, and much of the juice and flavor is carried off in steam. Fast boiling is also an unnecessary waste of heat, and, as it injures rather than improves the meat, it is even worse than unnecessary.

To Wash a Bread Board.

Always wash a bread board with cold water and soap if you wish to keep it a good color. Never wash the board in an iron pan or sink, for the iron is apt to leave a black mark, which is very difficult to erase. A little silver sand added to the soap will greatly improve the appearance of the board if it is discolored.

The Care of the Kitchen.

No part of the house needs more care or attention than the kitchen, and yet it is often neglected in the interest of other household duties. It is undoubtedly the most difficult room in the house to renovate if neglected, and yet methodical attention will make the work of keeping it in order comparatively light. Dirt should never be allowed to accumulate in it, as it serves as an attraction, independent of any sanitary considerations, to flies and other vermin. Dishes should never be allowed to stand unwashed. The floor should be mopped up once a day and thoroughly scrubbed about once a week. There are many styles of self-wringing mops which can be procured at low prices.

To Wash Dishes Properly.

In these days of dainty table appointments great stress is laid on sparkling glass, shining silver, and pretty, not to say exquisite, porcelain. The proper care of these treasures is no mean part of household duties. In the days when the mistress of the house, following the example of Martha Washington and Dolly Madison, washed her own breakfast dishes, there were fewer lamentations over breakages, and less trial of temper over chipped edges. Washing dishes was a function of the old Virginia mansions of that day. Every morning and evening when the breakfast or supper was over, the colored major-domo brought a low table into the dining room and placed it at the mistress' right hand. On this he put two cedar tubs looped with brass, polished until it shone like gold, a large one for washing and a smaller one for rinsing, rather more than half filling each with hot water. Near these he placed a pile of clean towels, fragrant with sunshine and fresh air. The soap cup was a gourd, with holes bored in the bottom, better and stronger than any modern soap shaker, and thus equipped, the