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The Story of the New England  
Kitchen

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THE STORY \* \*  
OF THE

NEW ENGLAND

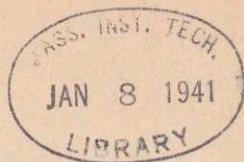
\* \* KITCHEN

*Mary Hinman Abel*

foreword by  
ELLEN H. RICHARDS.



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THE STORY  
OF THE  
NEW ENGLAND KITCHEN

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## PREFACE.

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THE story of the New England Kitchen, which Mrs. Abel has so charmingly told in the following pages, is remarkable for two things: the new and valuable information which has been acquired as the result of the daily work of the Kitchen, and the short time which has sufficed to put the enterprise on a business basis.

It is well to emphasize the causes of this success, that the lessons in social science and practical philanthropy be not lost. A large part of the credit is due, as the readers of this report will easily divine, to Mrs. Abel's hard work, as well as to her unusual ability, enthusiasm, and ready tact. So fully has Mrs. Abel been identified with the project from the beginning, that it is not easy to think of its successful issue without her aid. But ability and enthusiasm alone would not have sufficed to work out the problem undertaken in starting the New England Kitchen, which was, namely, an *experiment* to determine the successful conditions of preparing, by scientific methods, from the cheaper food materials, nutritious and palatable dishes, which should find a ready demand at paying prices.

Mrs. Abel would doubtless give as the principal secret of her success, that she had everything necessary for the experiments, without giving a thought to the cost. The work of the investigator is not at its best if he has to worry about the ways and means. In the New England Kitchen the selection of the apparatus and material and the employment of labor have been without restriction.

Food Coll.

Without this freedom to carry on the experiments as seemed wise and prudent, the results detailed in the accompanying report could not have been attained.

The philanthropy of the scheme rests in the experimental stage of the development of the New England Kitchen. Whether the business can in the future take care of itself to the profit of those who conduct it remains to be seen; but, in any event, kitchens of this kind cannot fail to be of great advantage to multitudes in moderate circumstances, who have hitherto been unable to buy good, nutritious, and tasteful cooked food.

For a charity that feeds the hungry there is no lack of the bounty of good people; but it is safe to say that not many could be found who would be willing to give liberally and unrestrictedly to carry on a scientific experiment in the hope of learning how the people might be better fed.

ELLEN H. RICHARDS.

BOSTON, Oct. 1, 1890.

REPORT  
TO  
MRS. QUINCY A. SHAW,  
CONCERNING THE FUND USED IN THE  
NEW ENGLAND KITCHEN.

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*JANUARY 1 TO JULY 1, 1890.*

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It was understood that this fund was to be used in making an experiment never before, to our knowledge, attempted in this country, namely, in the cooking of our cheapest and most nutritious food materials by better methods than are commonly in use, and to sell the same at moderate prices for consumption at home.

It was also understood that, if possible, an eating-room should be opened, particularly for men, as a rival to the saloon.

Except for this general outline, those who took the fund in charge were left free to work, according to their discretion; and it was agreed that the business of the New England Kitchen, between January and July, should be, first of all, the collection of facts as to the actual condition of the food supply of the masses, in order that more effective work for its improvement might be undertaken than was possible in the present fragmentary state of our knowledge; it being certain that much time and money used for charitable objects are often wasted for lack of a sufficient body of facts as a foundation.

We must know how people live, how they cook, and what they buy ready cooked, what peculiar tastes and prejudices they have, in order to lay out any satisfactory plan of reform.

It would be well to state at the beginning that whatever we have accomplished we feel is owing to our close adherence to this method, holding ever in mind, as of first importance, the collection of facts, and letting opinions and plans be constantly modified by them. In short, we have attempted to apply to the subject the spirit that guides all modern scientific research.

The first step was the renting of a first-floor room and cellar at 142 Pleasant Street, a respectable part of the city, consisting mostly of small shops and of houses let out in flats or rooms, and occupied by people who follow various trades. It is within a short walk of the main business thoroughfares. This place was secured in December, and rented for one year. Quite extensive repairs were necessary, and a large outlay for plumbing and cleaning, and not until late in January was this work completed. Meantime the necessary furnishings were bought, and many experiments were made in cooking the lower-priced meats and cereals. At this point, and ever since, much help has been derived from the work done under a grant from the Elizabeth Thompson Fund. The quality of the beef broth is owing entirely to it. We have had the use of expensive utensils, paid for from that fund, and the results of work for which we should otherwise have scarcely ventured to expend the money, such as the frequent analysis of the beef broth at the Institute of Technology.

The difficulty that met us at the outset was to obtain competent service. Day after day of patient search brought only discouragement. At the intelligence offices we conversed mainly with two classes: the cook "who only worked for the first families on Beacon Street, at eight dollars a week," and "could n't do no public cookin'"; and the restaurant cook, whose conceit and demands in all directions put her out of the question. We had heard that there was a large class of women of middle age, mostly widows, of considerable household experience, but not skilful enough to obtain positions as cooks. This sort of

woman seemed likely to suit our purpose, but we never found her.

On Jan. 24, 1890, the Kitchen was opened for the sale of food. The dishes that we offered were beef broth, vegetable soup, pea soup, corn mush, boiled hominy, oat-meal mush, cracked wheat, and spiced beef. To the above dishes the following have been added, which still stand on the list: beef stew, fish chowder, tomato soup, Indian pudding, rice pudding, and another form of pressed meat, and oat-meal scones. Besides these, many other dishes have been tried, and relinquished because they did not prove popular, or were not adapted to our use; such, for instance, as would not keep hot without loss of flavor.

To illustrate the natural growth and development of the work done in the Kitchen, it will be necessary to speak somewhat of the cooking of these dishes in detail. This will also give an idea of how much labor has been necessary to gain these apparently simple results. The requirements that a given dish had to meet were not few. First, the cost of materials must not go beyond a certain limit. Second, the labor of making it must not be too great. Third, it must be really nutritious and healthful. Fourth, it must be in a form that it could be easily served, and kept hot without loss of flavor. Fifth, it must suit the popular taste enough to be salable. These requirements, when met, make a *standard* dish, as compared with one suited only to occasional times. Many dishes failed when judged by these requirements, which will, in part, account for the shortness of our list.

The making of the beef broth for invalids, which was to be also the stock for our meat soups, was the first care; and we find from the records kept at that time, that before the Kitchen was opened, twenty experiments were performed on this dish alone. The old-fashioned method of making soup in a pot on the stove was tried, and given up; the use of a Papin soup

digester was no more satisfactory, the difficulty of regulating the heat and of retaining the flavors of the meat being found to be insurmountable. Gas or oil used under a pot gave little better satisfaction, the bottom being always hotter than the top, and the loss of heat from the whole surface proving wasteful. The labor of making soup by these methods was considerable, and it required the constant supervision of an experienced hand; moreover, no way could be devised for making large quantities at a time. Along with these experiments went others with the Aladdin oven, which were so promising in their results that we had tin-lined copper vessels made, to utilize the entire capacity of the oven, *i. e.*, thirty quarts, and settled on this method for making the broth. It was found to have these advantages: First, it made the scientific requirements for soup-making possible, *i. e.*, (a) long, slow heating, before the coagulating point was reached; (b) the continuation of the cooking at a temperature slightly below the boiling point, and long enough to get from the bones and tendons that proportion of gelatine which we knew to be desirable; (c) the retention of the full flavor; (d) and the production of a soup almost invariable in quality. Second, the greatest possible amount of broth was in this way obtained from a given quantity of meat and bones, no other process approaching it in this respect. Third, the labor involved was very small; nothing, in fact, between the placing of the vessel in the oven and removing it for straining. It suited our convenience, also, in that the cooking could be done at night, the meat being prepared during the day; and although the lamp under the oven went out some hours before the soup could be strained, the non-conducting character of the apparatus kept the heat, and prevented any deterioration of the soup. Fourth, the cost of fuel was reduced to a minimum, twenty-five quarts of broth being made with three pints of kerosene, at a cost of less than five cents.

This method, with very slight changes, has been in constant

use in the Kitchen, and has proved perfectly satisfactory. We consider it a real discovery, of great value; and we hope that it will, in time, be adopted in large institutions. Its success, like that of every other method we have used, is based on the most careful study of every detail, and constant vigilance to see that every part is carried out.

The pea soup, which was considered a very important dish, because of its cheapness and high nutritive qualities, was finally made by the same method, *i. e.*, in the Aladdin oven, it being found that if the range was used for cooking this soup long enough to bring out the necessary flavor, the soup was very likely to be burned. Even the girls at work in the Kitchen were finally convinced that it was not sufficient, as they had always thought, to cook the peas soft enough so that they would go through a strainer; even they saw the difference in the flavor and consistency. The flavors used in this soup were several times modified, at the suggestion of customers, and it has remained a steady favorite. A vegetable soup was also one of the charter members, and was made with a basis of meat broth and various vegetables, its nutritive value being increased by the large amount of long-cooked barley used in it.

Much time was used in experiments on the cooking of the cereals into ordinary mush or porridge. After using the ordinary kitchen pot and the double boiler without the best results, we adopted the Arnold Steam Cooker, and cooked the grains five hours by steam, having decided that this was most favorable to both digestibility and flavor.

After the Kitchen was opened, careful attention was given to the inquiries and suggestions of customers, as giving the best hints for extending our bill of fare. "Beef stew" was demanded from the first, and there were many calls for "dumplings" in the soup. This only suggested to us unsightly chunks of meat and potato, with gray balls of that old-fashioned abomination, whose sodden name is enough to condemn it, and our

scientific authority even forbade its manufacture. It was found that the modern baking powder variety would not brook delay in serving, and must also be prepared at the last moment, when there was the greatest pressure of work. But the call continued, and it was evident we were bracing ourselves against a very popular dish.

Macaroni was thought of as a substitute for dumplings, but was found to be too expensive; noodles required eggs, which were then forty cents a dozen. Finally, a friend suggested a paste made with flour and soup. This, used with the noodle method, proved a success, the paste being rolled very thin and cut in squares and dried, and this could be done in the afternoon leisure of the previous day. At this hour, also, the meat for the dish was cooked until very tender, and cut into cubes, and the potatoes prepared and cut in the same way, so that all could be put together the next morning with the necessary despatch, and thoroughly cooked. The result was an inviting and delicious dish which has been a great favorite, and which, like the pea soup, is a great triumph in perfect nutritive quality, at low cost.

Fish chowder was another dish that was prepared to meet an evident demand; and here, also, ordinary methods have been adapted to our needs, resulting in a dish so popular that we have often sold, on Fridays, seventy quarts of this alone. At this date I find in my diary, "Great relief among our customers at the appearance of the chowder."

Tomato soup was called for in the early spring, and in making it, we had before us quite a new problem, in providing with its pleasant acid the amount of nutriment that we had resolved our customers should have in each dish. To give a meat broth flavored with tomato would be too expensive; a very acid soup could not be eaten in sufficient quantities to give nourishment, and it was thought best to somewhat neutralize the acid, while adding a good quantity of broth. Sugar was found to give a

distinctly sweet taste, which we knew would not "wear"; but by using a little sugar and also a very small quantity of soda, the right result was obtained.

These instances will sufficiently indicate the kind of work done. We have had in view constantly the necessary compromise between popular tastes and our determination that nothing should be furnished that was not wholesome and nutritious.

#### *SUCCESS OF THE KITCHEN SOUPS, ETC.*

It has been said that Americans will not eat soups. This seems not to be true, if only the soups are not of that thin variety only suitable for the first course of a dinner. As the English woman said, "My man likes summat to bite on; he ain't much for long drinks." The soups have been liked and praised, their "home flavor" being often spoken of. Our customers also notice that a soup of the same name is uniform day by day. As one man said of two portions of his favorite pea soup, "It might have come out of the same pot, just so thick, just so tasty." "I have n't tasted anything so good since my mother's cooking," said a sewing-girl to one who had told her of the place.

Miss Parloa and other successful teachers of cookery have expressed their surprise that what was cooked in such large quantities should be so delicately flavored. A woman said, "My folks won't have my soups any more." Another said, "I don't have that gnawin' feelin' any more, since I have your things."

The most of our sales are now to regular customers, and it is evident that the growth has been in the "from neighbor to neighbor" way. In making these soups we have kept the familiar names and appearances, and it has worked well. The Pilgrim succotash, made of beans and hulled corn, was a new dish, and we failed to popularize it. The pressed meat is more

and more appreciated. Indeed, anything that makes bread "go down" finds favor; but for great numbers of people the eating of vegetable food in any other form than bread, it would seem, has yet to be cultivated. The cereals have, as yet, but small sale. The rice and Indian puddings are liked, especially since warm weather.

#### *BREAD.*

It has been thought by many of our friends that we should put bread upon our list, and we at first intended to do so, but it soon became evident that such bread as we should make, sold for a reasonable price, would be in such a demand that we could not supply it, with our present facilities; success in that line was a foregone conclusion, and it seemed best to put our work on more doubtful points. Moreover, it did not seem best as yet to undertake something that would surely antagonize the small dealers around us. So far, we have entered no occupied ground, and have had the good-will of all; but experiments on the bread question have been going on, and we shall have something to say on the subject a little later.

#### *MILK.*

It had been one of our objects, from the first, to do something, before the heat of summer, to improve the milk supply for the little children. We at first intended to sterilize the milk as brought from the country, but it was found that the milk, when it reached us, was already not less than twelve hours, and often twenty-four hours old, and it seemed that, to obtain satisfactory results, the sterilizing must be done in the country. At this time, the "evaporated milk" made by the Orange County Milk Company came to our notice, and, after a thorough examination, we resolved to give it our sanction, and put it on sale in the Kitchen.

For the sanitary and scientific side of the work on milk we must refer to the separate report to Mr. Edward Atkinson and the Trustees of the Elizabeth Thompson Fund.

#### *NEED OF THE KITCHEN.*

It was to be determined how great was the need of improving the food of our wage-earning classes. Was such an enterprise as this really needed? Our opinions on this point are based on many small observations, for it must be remembered that no interviewing of our customers has been allowed, nor anything inconsistent with a regular place of business.

Three fourths of our customers are from what we call the working classes, and many are sewing-women, who live in lodgings, and eat the food furnished by the cheaper restaurants, supplemented by what they call "baker's stuff." Most frequently it is the latter, with tea, which they make in their own rooms. What we have heard of the over-use of tea is more than confirmed. Even among those who keep house there seems to be very little cooking done, and the dependence is more and more on baker's bread and cheap cake.

I remember, however, a very intelligent woman with whom I talked, who seemed to have made an admirable study of all the foods within reach, so as to get up a varied and attractive diet; but even she "had not always time," and so came often to the Kitchen.

Some expressed with vigor their dissatisfaction with the food they had been living on. "I'm disgusted with pie and cake for lunch — can't work on it; but I can work half a day on this pea soup."

One tailoress told me how times had changed since she first began to sew, when women lived in the family of their employer. "Now they have to look out for themselves, and they have to live just anyhow."

The children of the neighborhood, if judged by any high standard, do not look well nourished. They, too, drink tea, and live too largely on baker's bread and cake. The consumption of vinegar pickles among them is enormous. One grocer said that he sold hundreds of them a day, the same child often eating four or five.

It is surprising in how many families no plans are made for the approaching meal until it is too late to cook anything that requires time; and this explains why there is no habit of eating the cheaper grades of meat made into soups and stews, the cereals, and the valuable legumes, all of which require long cooking. In many cases, when the meal time arrives, a child is despatched to buy in the shops whatever suits taste and purse.

Another class, but smaller, would do better, but are pressed for time. In general, it may be said, that utensils, skill, time, and disposition for good cookery are one or all lacking, and can we wonder that the result is poor, when we know in how few cases cookery in the houses of the wealthy is what it should be?

The time seems rapidly coming, in our large cities, when the food eaten in the families of the poor and of the wage-earning classes will not be cooked at home. This has long been the case in foreign cities, and the need has been supplied by private enterprise, and by great institutions like the Volksküche, of Germany, and the Fourneau Economique, of Paris, having a charitable basis, the best of them becoming in time self-supporting. There seem to be some reasons why institutions of this kind, adapted to the different circumstances of our country, are even more needed here than in Europe, notwithstanding the higher rate of wages here. The restaurants of cheaper grade are very poor; moreover, the women of our people do not seem to have the inherited or acquired skill in cooking that is seen among the women of European countries, nor do we seem to know as well when we are properly nourished, tending far

too much toward sweet and condensed foods, and anything that will allay hunger for the time.

In summer there is an added reason for the existence of these depots for cooked foods. To prepare them at home, even should all of the other requirements be present, means the heating up of a small apartment to a degree that makes life almost insupportable in it.

Those who go into the country the first of May, or those even who live in the suburbs, do not know what July and August heats are to those who live in narrow and unshaded streets.

#### *SCHOOL-GIRLS AND WORKERS IN FACTORIES.*

Aside from the ordinary demand in families for such an institution, there seem to be large bodies of girls attending school or working in dressmaking establishments, stores, factories, etc., whose food, especially for the luncheon hour, is not at all what it should be. Some of these have been reached, and plans for further help are under consideration.

#### *SIDE RESULTS.*

Under this heading may be summed up results, both expected and unexpected, that are aside from the main object, but which could never have been attained without the Kitchen as a rallying point, and as a means of bringing us into communication with many classes of people. The agent of the census or of the Labor Bureau has small opportunity compared with us who have the Kitchen counter for our vantage ground.

We expected to give help and have been able to do so, but we did not expect to receive in such full measure help, suggestion, and experience from others.

Household experience of all sorts, new facts about foods, new utensils and suggestions for the use of old ones, practical lessons

at the Kitchen work-table from celebrated cooks, and those whose skill was known only to a small circle, points in economy far beyond our own experience, even to the great value of pork rinds and skinned chicken feet for soup; hearty God-speed from such men as Dr. Edward Everett Hale, who said, "I've been waiting fifteen years for something of this kind"; these are but instances at random of the many pleasant and profitable things that have brightened our days.

As we belonged to no school, no sect, no anything that had had existence before, we have antagonized neither classes nor individuals, and have had the most hearty encouragement from all.

#### EDUCATIONAL RESULTS.

##### *First.* Quality of food.

As to the real good we have done, there has been much that may be called educational. People are not as good judges of food as of most other things that they buy; at least, of its nutritive qualities, being often deceived by appearance or flavor.

We find that those who have always lived in a city or on small means are not good judges of the freshness of vegetables, nor indeed of other food; and this is borne out by the fact, which we have on good authority, that the restaurant keepers around the market know that they cannot palm off on their customers anything "off color," but have to send it to branch establishments in localities where observation in these lines is less cultivated. When we began to make fish chowder, we contracted for fish at a certain price; but after we had several times returned what was delivered, and it was found only the freshest would suit us, the price was nearly doubled. "We sell that fish" (meaning the first) "to every one around there," said the fish dealer, "and out on the Back Bay too." Nothing but repeated eating of better food will teach people what poor stuff many of the restaurants offer.

This education, as to the nutritive value of food, has not been confined to any class. As before mentioned, the circulars regarding the beef broth for invalids were sent to all the physicians in Boston, and the effect was quite surprising. It soon became apparent that there was a call to educate the people in general, at least as to food for the sick, and the right way to prepare it. That anything in the food line can be relied on, and be found actually the same in flavor and strength from day to day, invariable as the medicine of a first-class apothecary, seems to be a new experience to both doctor and patient, and we feel that the steady maintenance of this standard has had an important educative value. Concerning this most important dish of the invalids' dietary, we hope that a step in advance has been taken for this whole community. That combination of nutrients which ought, theoretically, to be the most valuable has been proved to be so by the effect upon patients, and a cheap, easy, and exact method has been devised for making it.

For the beef broth we could have gathered up "testimonials" by the score. We have been especially pleased with one point, namely, that it is a normal food, and not a stimulant. Patients take it week after week, without tiring of the taste, or craving what they should not have. The indications are, that this method of making beef broth will prove to be a first step in the much-needed reformation of hospital cookery.

*Second. — Cleanliness.*

We have been able to make the Kitchen a sort of object lesson in cleanliness. We resolved in the beginning that there must be no compromise on this point. There should be no covered or curtained spaces, every cooking process should be open to the public, and scrupulous cleanliness should rule everywhere. To gain this, has cost more effort and more money than we calculated at first, but no part of our work has paid better.

"How clean you are!" has been the surprised exclamation from people of all classes; as though, indeed, it were necessary

for a kitchen to be dirty; and these remarks, heard from rich and poor, have borne unconscious witness to a low standard of kitchen cleanliness among us.

We are glad to find that no one has thought of applying to our food the ordinary sneer at restaurant methods, "The less you know about it, the better for your peace of mind."

The placard at first hung at the Winchester Street door, "Entrance on Pleasant Street," was soon taken down, and to our customers the side door has been as free as the front, and there has been observation of what was going on at the work-tables, the stove, and the water-bath, unchecked. Taking a hint from certain establishments in foreign countries, we had calculated from the first on the attractiveness of cooking methods, not exactly as an advertisement, but as a warrant for the things cooked; and in this way we have not been disappointed, and we think it ought to be an essential feature of such an enterprise.

#### *DIFFICULTIES.*

It will be useful, as throwing light on any future extension of this enterprise, to state what have been the chief difficulties encountered so far, together with some suggestions for meeting them.

In every department of the work the chief difficulty has been to find trained helpers, or even those willing or able to learn. It would seem that considerable normal-school work is necessary before such an enterprise could be greatly extended. The cook already satisfied with her accomplishments and her wages must be avoided. A good class of girls, who prize a nice home in a private family, are not to be tempted by anything we can offer; but there are those of probably greater intelligence, but less training, who like the independence of the position, as more nearly approaching that of factory life, and we feel sure that in time such could be attracted to our work.

The most of our difficulties have come from the fact that our work was all new. We could not copy the methods of others; only gather hints and suggestions. Our visits to hotel kitchens, and to large boarding houses, as in Lowell, only showed us kitchen furniture too expensive or too imperfect for our uses.

Our simple "bain-marie" and the gas-table, that in May took the place of the range, finally had to be made after our own designs, and this may serve as an illustration of what has been done at every turn.

#### *COST AND PRICES.*

In setting the price of the dishes with which we opened the Kitchen we allowed in round numbers: one third for cost of materials, one third for cost of service, one third to cover other expenses, and this on a basis of large sales. This allowed of such prices as would be low enough to attract the class we wished to reach.

All of the meat soups were sold for twelve cents a quart; the pea soup for ten cents a quart; the pressed meat for twelve cents a pound; and the mushes for five cents a pound.

To duly illustrate the business side of the matter, take the record of one day's work and sales, early in June. Three persons were busied from seven to eleven, in the manufacture of eleven quarts of tomato soup, six quarts of stew, thirty quarts of chowder, eighteen quarts of pea soup, sixteen quarts of vegetable soup, two bars of pressed meat, two bars of corn mush, and five bowls of Indian pudding.

One of the three workers then went to cleaning, and two were occupied in selling from eleven to one. In the afternoon, tomato soup and beef stew were made and two bars of spiced meat. The beef which had been cleaned and cut up in the morning (about one hundred and eighty pounds, and requiring about four

hours' work from the man) was weighed and put to cook, as also the pea soup, and more cleaning was done.

The amount of food cooked in the morning happened, on this day, to be all sold at one o'clock; receipts, \$10.50. These receipts are a little above the average, as they always are on the days when chowder is sold. The evening receipts were \$2.

Of this \$12.50, \$5.25 goes for service, \$1 for rent, about eighty cents for fuel. The \$6.25 remaining would cover the food materials used, but there is nothing left for such incidental expenses as paper, postage, advertising, loss on food not sold, and the wear and tear of utensils and other furnishings. Or more in detail:—

1. The one third of the receipts, set aside for materials, has proved to be insufficient, because estimates were made at the cheapest times of the year for the foods that we use, nothing being allowed for the rise of price in meat and in vegetables that met us in the spring. It was also found that some dishes added later could not be quite as cheaply made, either taking more time, as the chowder and stew, or costing a little more, as in the case of the tomato soup. Instead of the one third for materials, about one half of the selling price was required.

2. The one third allowed for service was insufficient, for two reasons: it costs far more to keep clean than we had calculated, and a girl sufficiently accurate to be trusted with our cooking is worth more money than we at first paid.

Then, owing to the insufficient supply of help and necessary changes, we have worked sometimes at a loss, having to hire work by the day which could have been done more economically hired by the week.

Again, no allowance was made for the time required for the selling, and to cover unforeseen interruptions and delays. On these accounts the cost of service has been nearly double what we calculated, and, with the rent and fuel, has taken the other half of the receipts.

3. Even could one third of the receipts have been reserved for incidentals, it would not have been sufficient. It would not provide for several items given in the financial statement, and which, it would seem, accompany any regular business. There must be allowance for the loss on food that is left on our hands unsold, and also for accident; although not as much, of course, in the later conduct of a business as in its beginning or experimental stage. Each dish that has been introduced has involved quite a series of experiments, but as a result we have standard dishes instead of what suits only a passing taste.

Again, the quantity of food manufactured, though of only a few kinds, was very large; and to manage without loss, required experience that we could not borrow, but must get for ourselves.

How to make, cool, and keep fifty to one hundred quarts of beef stock daily, we failed to learn, even in the kitchen of one of our best hotels, and our first attempt was naturally a failure.

It only remains to state a few points in connection with our experimental work in which our calculations were not verified.

We expected to use a large part of the meat left from soup-making in a kind of pressed meat, where the nutriment still left in it should be utilized in connection with new flavors added to replace natural ones that had gone into the soup; but all our efforts have resulted in only a small degree of success in popularizing it.

We have been advised to make this meat into mince meat, but we resisted the temptation to cover our loss in this way, since we had undertaken to furnish only healthful and nutritious foods.

Another reason why service has cost so much has been in connection with the unexpected success of the beef broth for invalids, which was originally only the stock out of which our soups were to be made, and we did not anticipate at first giving to its manufacture such great care as has proved necessary.

The unexpected role of purveyor for the sick that has been thrust upon us has made us very humble and vigilant, and is the real reason why we have not dared to put our cooking into such hands as we had at first thought could be trusted with it.

Again, the evaporated milk for children, which seemed also in the line of public duty, has not yet added anything to our income.

#### SALES.

Five months, the time the Kitchen has been opened, is not long enough to effect much change in the daily habits of a community in a direction where change is so slow as it is in food. Moreover, the habitual buying of the family food already cooked means more than the substituting of one kind of baking powder or soap for another. It means that the woman who has cooked her dinner shall come to use her time otherwise, and more profitably; an adjustment not rapidly brought about nor even to be started until the superiority of such food has been proved by good trial. But some such readjustment is necessary to insure large patronage for cooked-food depots, for they cannot, of course, compete with the woman who does not count either her time or her fire in the preparation of a dish. The Kitchen is of most value at present to women living in lodgings. The family table and the workman's dinner-pail will feel the influence later.

Besides this slowness to change, the advertising now in vogue has accustomed people to give no heed to what is not actually forced on the attention. A man, living near by, came in late in June for the first time, and then only because his wife had gone out of town. "Saw it every day, but did not think of coming in." We have not advertised, because at no time were we ready to meet an increased demand, on account of the scarcity of good service. Then to make such a place not only attract but hold its customers, a much greater number of

dishes must be provided, and to do more than we have done in this line has been, so far, impossible. We have thought best to reach success in a few things rather than fail in many.

We have sometimes called the Kitchen a household experiment station, and we have freely given to all inquirers of our experience in the use of utensils and cooking methods in general.

Our own conviction is, that our investigation in the New England Kitchen has struck at the root of many evils, and that on the foundation we have so quietly laid, much building can be done, both in the direction of public effort and private household life, especially in teaching better methods of living.

MARY HINMAN ABEL.

BOSTON, Aug. 1, 1890.

