

= Mrs Beeton 's Book of Household Management =

Mrs Beeton 's Book of Household Management , also published as Mrs Beeton 's Cookery Book , is an extensive guide to running a household in Victorian Britain , edited by Isabella Beeton and first published as a book in 1861 . It had previously been published in parts . It was originally entitled Beeton 's Book of Household Management , as one of the series of guide @-@ books published by her husband , Samuel Beeton . The recipes were highly structured , in contrast to earlier cookbooks . It was illustrated with many monochrome and colour plates .

Although Mrs Beeton died in 1865 , the book continued to be a best @-@ seller . The first editions after her death contained an obituary notice , but this was removed from later editions , allowing readers to imagine that every word was written by an experienced Mrs Beeton personally . This fiction was expressed in one of Arthur Conan Doyle 's novels , where a character declares : " Mrs Beeton must have been the finest housekeeper in the world , therefore Mr. Beeton must have been the happiest and most comfortable man " .

Many of the recipes were copied from the most successful cookery books of the day including Eliza Acton 's Modern Cookery for Private Families , Elizabeth Raffald 's The Experienced English Housekeeper , Marie @-@ Antoine Carême 's Le Pâtissier royal parisien , Hannah Glasse 's The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy , Maria Eliza Rundell 's A New System of Domestic Cookery , and the works of Charles Elmé Francatelli . This practice of Mrs Beeton 's has in modern times repeatedly been described as plagiarism .

The book expanded steadily in length , until by 1907 it reached 74 chapters and over 2000 pages . Nearly two million copies were sold by 1868 , and it remains in print ( as of 2016 ) . Between 1875 and 1914 it was probably the most often consulted cookery book . Mrs Beeton has been compared on the strength of the book with modern domestic goddesses like Nigella Lawson and Delia Smith .

= = History = =

The author , Isabella Beeton , was 21 years old when she started working on the book . It was initially serialised in 24 monthly instalments , in her husband Samuel Orchard Beeton 's publication The Englishwoman 's Domestic Magazine ; the first instalment appeared in 1859 . On 1 October 1861 , the instalments were collected into one volume with the title The Book of Household Management , comprising information for the Mistress , Housekeeper , Cook , Kitchen @-@ Maid , Butler , Footman , Coachman , Valet , Upper and Under House @-@ Maids , Lady 's @-@ Maid , Maid @-@ of @-@ all @-@ Work , Laundry @-@ Maid , Nurse and Nurse @-@ Maid , Monthly Wet and Sick Nurses , etc. etc . ? also Sanitary , Medical , & Legal Memoranda : with a History of the Origin , Properties , and Uses of all Things Connected with Home Life and Comfort .

In its preface she wrote :

I must frankly own , that if I had known , beforehand , that this book would have cost me the labour which it has , I should never have been courageous enough to commence it . What moved me , in the first instance , to attempt a work like this , was the discomfort and suffering which I had seen brought upon men and women by household mismanagement . I have always thought that there is no more fruitful source of family discontent than a housewife 's badly @-@ cooked dinners and untidy ways .

Beeton 's half @-@ sister , Lucy Smiles , was later asked about her memories of the book 's development . She recalled :

Different people gave their recipes for the book . That for Baroness pudding ( a suet pudding with a plethora of raisins ) was given by the Baroness de Tessier , who lived at Epsom . No recipe went into the book without a successful trial , and the home at Pinner was the scene of many experiments and some failures . I remember Isabella coming out of the kitchen one day , ' This won 't do at all , ' she said , and gave me the cake that had turned out like a biscuit . I thought it very good . It had currants in it .

Previously published as a part @-@ work , it was first published as a book in 1861 by S. O. Beeton Publishing , 161 Bouverie Street , London , a firm founded by Samuel Beeton . The book was an

immediate best @-@ seller , selling 60 @,@ 000 copies in its first year and totalling nearly two million by 1868 . In 2010 a copy of the first edition of Household Management in " top condition " was stated to be worth more than £ 1 @,@ 000 . In 1863 a revised edition was issued .

In 1866 , a year after Isabella 's death , Samuel was in debt due to the collapse of Overend and Gurney , a London discount house to which he owed money . To save himself from bankruptcy he sold the copyright to all of his publications for a little over £ 19 @,@ 000 . Of that , the rights to Household Management were sold to publishers Ward , Lock and Tyler for £ 3 @,@ 250 . The early editions included an obituary notice for Beeton , but the publishers insisted it be removed " allowing readers to imagine ? perhaps even as late as 1915 ? that some mob @-@ capped matriarch was out there still keeping an eye on them " .

Revisions to Household Management by its publisher have continued to the present day . The effort has kept the Beeton name in the public eye for over 125 years , although current editions are far removed from those published in Mrs. Beeton 's lifetime . By 1906 the book had 2 @,@ 056 pages , " exclusive of advertising " , with 3 @,@ 931 recipes and was " half as large again " as the previous edition .

= = Book = =

= = = Contents = = =

The following description refers to the 1907 edition ; the book had been greatly extended in the decades since Mrs. Beeton 's death ( in 1865 ) to 74 chapters and over 2000 pages ; the first edition had 44 chapters .

The book begins with general chapters on the duties of the " mistress " , the housekeeper , and the cook . There follow chapters on the kitchen itself , " marketing " ( choosing good @-@ quality produce at the market ) , and an introduction to cookery ( Chapter 6 ) . Together , these take up over 100 pages . Chapters 7 to 38 ( roughly 1000 pages ) cover English cooking , with recipes for soups , gravies , fish , meat ( principally veal , beef , mutton and lamb , and pork ) , poultry , game , preserves , vegetables , pastries , puddings , sweets , jams , pickles , and savouries . Chapter 39 describes the " art of carving at table " , supported by 11 illustrations . Chapters 40 to 50 ( some 200 pages ) give instructions for dairy products , vegetarian and invalid ( sick person ) cookery , making bread , biscuits and cakes , and beverages . Chapters 51 to 59 describe cooking in various international styles including French , German , Spanish , Jewish , Australian , South African , Indian , American and Canadian cookery . Chapters 60 to 68 provide guidance on matters from trussing poultry to the definitions of culinary terms , arranging meals , decorating the table , making menus and the duties of domestic servants . Chapters 69 to 73 describe " household recipes " and medical preparations . The final chapter , 74 , offers " legal memoranda " .

There is a detailed index . The edition includes advertisements for products such as " Lemco " beef extract and " Cadbury 's Cocoa " .

= = = Approach = = =

The preface sets out the book 's goal of providing " men " with such well @-@ cooked food at home that it may compete with what they could eat " at their clubs , well @-@ ordered taverns , and dining @-@ houses " . Mrs. Beeton claims that

I have attempted to give , under the chapters devoted to cookery , an intelligible arrangement to every recipe , a list of the ingredients , a plain statement of the mode of preparing each dish , and a careful estimate of its cost , the number of people for whom it is sufficient , and the time when it is seasonable

She explains that she was thus attempting to make the basics of cookery " intelligible " to any " housewife " .

The first chapter sets the tone of the book with a quotation from the Book of Proverbs , and in early

editions cites also The Vicar of Wakefield with

The modest virgin , the prudent wife , and the careful matron , are much more serviceable in life than petticoated philosophers , blustering heroines , or virago queens . She who makes her husband and her children happy , who reclaims the one from vice and trains up the other to virtue

The book thus advocates early rising , cleanliness , frugality , good temper , and the wisdom of interviewing servants rather than relying on written references .

Cookery is introduced with words about " the progress of mankind from barbarism to civilization " , with a mention of man " in his primitive state , [ living ] upon roots and the fruits of the earth " , rising to become in turn " a hunter and a fisher " ; then a " herdsman " and finally " the comfortable condition of a farmer . " It is granted that " the fruits of the earth , the fowls of the air , the beasts of the field , and the fish of the sea , are still the only food of mankind " , but that

these are so prepared , improved , and dressed by skill and ingenuity , that they are the means of immeasurably extending the boundaries of human enjoyments . The text then swiftly passes to a description of simple measures like a table @-@ spoonful , and the duties of servants .

The whole of the rest of the book is taken up with instructions for cooking , with an introduction in each chapter to the type of food it describes . The first of these , on soups , begins " Lean , juicy beef , mutton , and veal , form the basis of all good soups ; therefore it is advisable to procure those pieces which afford the richest succulence , and such as are fresh @-@ killed . " The account of how to make soup consists of a single essay , divided into general advice and numbered steps for making any kind of ( meat @-@ based ) soup . This is followed in early editions by a separate chapter of recipes for soups of different kinds .

Each recipe is structured into a title , a list of ingredients ( with quantities , either natural ? as a number of eggs or vegetables , a number of slices of ham ? or measured in Imperial units ? ounces of salt , quarts of water . The actual instructions are headed " Mode " , as " Cut up the veal , and put it with the bones and trimmings of poultry " . A separate section gives the overall preparation time , and the average cost as , for example , " 9d. per quart " . Many recipes state in separate brief sections when a recipe is " Seasonable " and for how many persons it is " Sufficient " . Finally , a " Note " gives any required advice , as " When stronger stock is desired , double the quantity of veal , or put in an old fowl . " This highly structured presentation was the book 's main innovation .

= = = Oddities = = =

Despite professing to be a guide of reliable information about every aspect of running a house for the aspirant middle classes , the original edition devotes 23 pages to household management , then discusses cooking for almost all of the other 900 . Even with the emphasis on food , some of her cooking advice is so odd as to suggest that she had little experience preparing meals . For example , the book recommends boiling pasta for an hour and forty @-@ five minutes . Like many other British people of her social class and generation , Mrs Beeton adopted a distaste for unfamiliar foods , saying that mangoes tasted like turpentine , lobsters were indigestible , garlic was offensive , potatoes were " suspicious ; a great many are narcotic , and many are deleterious " , cheese could only be consumed by sedentary people , and tomatoes were either good or bad for a range of reasons .

Unlike earlier cookbook authors , such as Hannah Glasse , the book offered an " emphasis on thrift and economy " . It also discarded the style of previous writers who employed " daunting paragraph [ s ] of text with ingredients and method jumbled up together " for what is a recognisably modern " user @-@ friendly formula listing ingredients , method , timings and even the estimated cost of each recipe " .

= = = Plagiarism = = =

In a critical letter , Mrs Beeton 's sister Mrs Henrietta Mary Pourtois English advised her that " Cookery is a Science that is only learnt by Long Experience and years of study which of course you have not had . Therefore my advice would be compile a book from receipts from a Variety of the

Best Books published on Cookery and Heaven knows there is a great variety for you to choose from . " The recipes were largely copied from the most successful cookery books of the day , the copying in some cases acknowledged in the text . The " variety " included Eliza Acton 's Modern Cookery for Private Families and her The English Bread ? Book , Elizabeth Raffald 's The Experienced English Housekeeper , Marie @-@ Antoine Carême 's Le Pâtissier royal parisien , Louis Eustache Ude 's The French Cook , Alexis Soyer 's The Modern Housewife or , Ménagère and The Pantropheon , Hannah Glasse 's The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy , Maria Eliza Rundell 's A New System of Domestic Cookery , and the works of Charles Elmé Francatelli .

In modern times Mrs. Beeton 's practice has been criticised as plagiarism ; Beeton 's modern biographer Kathryn Hughes talks of her " lifting " and " brazenly copying " recipes from others , and says that this was " the way that cookery books had been put together from time immemorial ... " . The New York Times said , " Isabella [ Beeton ] plagiarised only the best " . This led to the comment that " Mrs Beeton couldn 't cook but she could copy " . Hughes recounts that Beeton 's " first recipe for Victoria sponge was so inept that she left out the eggs " and that her work was " brazenly copied ... almost word for word , from books as far back as the Restoration " . The influential 20th @-@ century food writer Elizabeth David dismissed her as " a plagiarist " and later wrote : " I wonder if I would have ever learned to cook at all if I had been given a routine Mrs Beeton to learn from " .

= = = Illustrations = = =

The 1907 edition runs to some 30 full @-@ page colour plates , and over 100 full @-@ page illustrations in monochrome . These include photographs , such as of the housekeeper standing with hands behind her back in her kitchen ( pictured ) , facing the first page of Chapter 2 , " The Housekeeper " . An idea of the amount of detail may be gained from the fact that there are 11 illustrations of types of fish ( one pictured ) , such as " steamed sole " and " soused mackerel " , and another of " fish entrées " .

One full @-@ page colour plate ( pictured ) illustrated a range of puddings , showing jelly , raspberry cream , a centre dish piled high with fruits , a trifle , and an ornamental flowerpot containing a strawberry plant .

Another full @-@ page colour plate ( pictured ) showed a variety of fruits including apricots , white and black cherries , white , red and black currants , a melon , strawberries and varieties of plums , all piled high on circular dishes or fruit stands .

= = Influence and legacy = =

= = = Contemporary = = =

The preface of Wilhelmina Rawson 's Queensland Cookery and Poultry Book ( 1878 ) , published in Australia , observes that : " Mrs Lance Rawson 's Cookery Book ... is written entirely for the Colonies , and for the middle classes , and for those people who cannot afford to buy a Mrs Beeton or a Warne , but who can afford the three shillings for this . "

The Oxford English Dictionary recognised that , by the 1890s , Beeton 's name " was adopted as a term for an authority on all things domestic and culinary " . The Robert Mondavi Institute for Wine and Food Science observed that " it was probably found in more homes than any other cookery book , and [ was probably ] the most often consulted , in the years 1875 to 1914 " .

A chapter of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle 's novel A Duet , with an Occasional Chorus ( 1899 ) is entitled , " Concerning Mrs. Beeton " ; a character declares : " Mrs Beeton must have been the finest housekeeper in the world , therefore Mr. Beeton must have been the happiest and most comfortable man " .

= = = Modern = = =

Mrs Beeton has been described as " the grandmother of modern domestic goddesses " , like Nigella Lawson and Delia Smith , who saw , as Beeton did , the need to provide reassuring advice on culinary matters for the British middle classes . However , while Lawson and Smith " insist that cooking can be easy , fun and uncomplicated " , Beeton " acknowledges the labour and skill required to cook well " .

The food writer and chef Gerard Baker tested and revised 220 of Beeton 's recipes , and published the result as Mrs. Beeton : How To Cook ( 2011 ) .

For the book 's 150th anniversary in 2011 the Royal Society of Chemistry planned to feature one of Beeton 's recipes . Due to the financial climate at the time in wake of the Great Recession , the Society selected Beeton 's toast sandwich , a dish that Beeton included to cater to the less well @-@ off .

In 2012 the food economist for the British television period drama Downton Abbey described Beeton 's book as an " important guide " for the food served in the series .

= = Editions = =

The book has appeared in many editions , including :