

The marmalade cutter, though of relatively limited use, is another item of equipment that may be worth its purchase money to a large household of marmalade eaters who like their peel sliced. Coffee mills and spice and pepper mills are among the luxuries that might be regarded as necessities by the gourmet, but they are neither time nor energy savers.

A great variety of shapes and sizes of graters is procurable. A grater should be easy to hold and have drilled rather than punched holes. Graters with the latter are harder to use and do not grate the food as cleanly.

Strainers of all shapes and sizes are also now available. As the wire screen breaking away from the metal rim is usually the first sign of wear, the care with which this is joined is a good indication of durability. Two or three pieces of metal ribbon beneath the bowls of some serve as extra support, but may make cleaning slightly more difficult. Conical strainers or sieves are also available, but are perhaps generally less useful, though their greater strength makes them useful when food is being sieved for purees. The size of wire screen should be chosen according to the work most likely to be required of the strainer. Though strainers may also be used as sifters, a flour sifter is useful. Whatever type is chosen, it should be manipulated before it is bought to ensure that the sifter works easily. Sifters are made either of tinned steel or aluminium; the latter has the advantage of being rust free.

Beaters and Mixers

A beater and mixing spoons are essential. Useful adjuncts which are simple to use and have no moving parts to break are the rubber scraper and the quick mixer shaped like a tumbler with special grooves in the

lid, sides, and bottom for mixing, and made either of plastic or aluminium. It mixes milk shakes for children, flour and water for thickening, and custards, and whips cream quickly and efficiently and is easily washed and stored. Care should be taken to avoid denting the aluminium mixer, as this causes it to leak, and the instructions should also be followed carefully. Wooden spoons with a flat side and straight bottom are also worth searching for, as they are effective in reaching right to the junction of the side and bottom of the saucepan when sauces and soft custards are being stirred. There are also specially shaped and slotted spoons and scoops or combination spoons and beaters, most of which are efficient.

Miscellaneous Gadgets

During recent years there has been a great increase in the number of gadgets designed to make new or novel types of baked goods, such as special types of cake tins, cutlet pans, egg poachers, and the various items designed for one purpose such as pea shellers, spoon holders (for the sides of saucepan), the gadgets designed to unscrew the lids of preserving jars, and cake-icing sets.

Doubtless a great many of these gadgets are bought on the spur of the moment to be seldom, if ever, used. Often such equipment is chosen for its novelty value rather than for its durability and ease of cleaning and care, but a really useful gadget of this type will also be of good design and durability. Storage space may also need to be considered for a small kitchen, as overcrowding of cupboards and drawers can cause great inconvenience. Whether such gadgets as fairy irons, cutlet pans (in addition to an ordinary frying pan), wire fish baskets, special fruit preserving equipment, pressure toasters, the various types of coffee makers, and moulds for cold cookery will be of real value to

a housewife depends usually on the amount of entertaining she does, whether she enjoys and does much baking, cooking, and preserving, and whether the novelty foods produced by some specially designed gadgets will tend to pall on acquaintance. Others may possess disadvantages which outweigh their advantages. For example, there are sandwich tins with a small rotating lifter which does remove the cake efficiently and prevents it sticking to the bottom of the pan, but it is extremely difficult to clean under the lifter, detracting from its value.

When small gadgets are being chosen it is preferable to select a few utensils each of which will perform a number of tasks rather than a number of gadgets with individual uses.

The articles should be sturdily constructed, with smooth, seamless surfaces and free from rough edges whenever possible. They should enable the work to be done efficiently, in moderate time, and with a minimum of effort, and should be reasonably easy to clean. Handles should be comfortable to hold, made of a durable material, and firmly fastened to the utensil with no unnecessary grooves.

Electrical Equipment and Large Equipment

The large, more expensive items of equipment naturally cause even the most enthusiastic gadgeteer to think twice before embarking on a purchase which may prove an expensive white elephant.

Such equipment includes pressure saucepans, preserving equipment, electric mixers and blenders, waffle irons, jugs, toasters, coffee percolators, hot plates, roasters, grills, and portable stoves. All can be useful time savers,



Various types of equipment for sieving, grating, and mincing.