

Growth of the American Kitchen
by
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108

As the heart by its ceaseless throbbing sends the stream of life through every part of the human system carrying disease or health, so the influence from the Kitchen brings to the entire household weal or woe. No matter how the heart is affected, the whole system is similarly affected; and according to the working of the Kitchen, the entire household is ruled. This has been true in past years, it is true of the present, and can we expect it to be less true in the future? As the power of the Kitchen is more and more realized, changes for the better are made, not only in the utensils, but in the foods. The Kitchen, therefore keeps pace with the general advancement of the country, in influencing and, in turn, being influenced by it.

The first woman had one advantage over the rest of woman-kind, her husband could not compare her food with his mother's, yet she was justly blamed when sorrow followed after he partook of the food she offered him. From that day to this moreover woman has been censured for offering all too frequently injurious rather than good food. To realize the great progress in Household Economy, let us compare the past with the present and take a glance into the future. To appreciate the Kitchen of today let us go back to our grandmothers.

This room was large because it was used for a living room, dining room and kitchen. The floor was as clean as a daily scouring with water and ashes applied with plenty of elbow grease could make it. Over-head, the somewhat smoky rafters were decorated with strings of dried pumpkins and apples, and bags of dried herbs. The windows contained small panes of glass over which the housewife spent considerable time in cleaning the numerous corners,

On one side was a large open fire place, on the left; a brick oven with a utensil cupboard underneath. On the right, was a row of hooks that held the fire place tools, on this side also were the spinning wheel, the reel and the swift. The indigo dye Kettle, the movable cupboard, the bench, the sixlegged table, the flour barrel and the stiff straight backed heavy chairs and the little low rocker were placed where grandmother saw fit. Now that we have a general view of the kitchen let us go into details.

The fire place was four and a half feet wide and took in a stick of cord wood. The fire place had to be used in summer as well as in winter.

The large flat stone in front contrasted strongly with the dark, iron, dismal-looking andirons

and the iron cranes. Above was the mantel. This was decorated with a bright, shining candle stick with its home made tallow dip, the snuffers and tray and the flint stones. The heavy sad irons and their cloth holders were silent witnesses to blistered hands and aching back. The turkey and chicken wings and the small splint broom were used to keep the hearth clean. On the hook at the right, was the tin warming pan which was used to warm the beds with and the long poker which was made for strength and not for beauty. Besides these, were two long handled iron ladles. one was perforated and used to take up greens, boiled eggs, chickens and the like, any thing in fact when the solid was wanted without the liquid. The other one was used for dipping up liquids. The hickory splint broom found a place in this corner. The brick oven was built on the left side of the fire place three or four feet above the floor. It was arched in the center and was large enough to hold from eight to twelve loaves of bread the size of a common milk pan. The door was fifteen inches high and two feet wide. Before the oven was needed for baking it was.

filled with dry wood and this was set fire to. The coals and ashes were raked out with a wooden tool that looked like a hoe, the oven swabed out; then some flour was thrown in and the door was shut while grand mother counted one, two, three. If the flour was browned sufficiently, the oven was ready for the bread. This was put in as rapidly as possible with a wooden paddle. The bread was first put in a clean floured cloth to raise. It was then turned out upon the paddle and with a little jerk landed on the bricks of the oven or upon a cabbage leaf. Here, it remained for an hour or so and was then taken out with the same paddle, and placed in clean cloths to cool. It was never burned nor raw in the middle but was just suited to the taste, especially the loaf cooked on the cabbage leaf. As soon as the bread was taken out; the pies and other foods were ready to be baked and were put in. For biscuits and ^{the} like, pressed shut iron pans were used. We come now to the wall cupboard. This held the pots, griddles, spiders and the tin roaster, the dutch oven and the toaster, and the meat forks. One of

the spiders was legless but had a cover to it. This was used to bake biscuits in. The roaster resembled a rounded trough set up side-wise with a small rod thrust through it length-ways. On this, the meat was turned and needed constant watching. The roaster, with its meat, was placed in front of the fire as near as possible. The bread pans, handed down from past generations, also found a place here. The movable cupboard held the pewter dishes for every day use, while the stone china with a blue band reigned supreme in the best-room, with the solid silver spoons. The two lined forks, with the steel knives, remained in the Kitchen. In the drawer of the cupboard could be found the table linen. This was spun and woven at home. Each girl of the family had to spin her own linen for future use, beginning this task in early childhood. On the water bench was the water bucket, the wooden tub for dish washing, and the brass kettle of soft soap. Behind which was the wooden fluted wash board. The kneading board was used to cover the flour barrel that

contained the wooden rolling pin. The six legged table was square cornered but longer than wide and was used for kitchen and dining table as well as for an ironing board. The hum of the spinning wheel, the whirr of the swift and reel told of their constant use. The wooden rods for the tallow dips were tied together and hung on one of the rafters. The sewing was done by hand. Grandmother learned the art of cooking from her mother and by practice, as there was no receipt book. Pie was the favorite dainty and there were pies of all sorts and sizes, though her enormous doughnuts and her seed cakes were always relished by young and old. All the good things to eat were kept on the shelves of the buttery. And often the six legged table had all it could stand up under. For the entire bill of fare was placed on the table at the same time.

What with candle and soap making; spinning and weaving to do, besides dyeing the yarn and cloth; doing all of the sewing by hand; though the utensils were few and of pewter, iron, and brass; her advantages limited; and her materials meager; yet grandfather prized grand

mother's cooking highly and it is even now quoted by her sons.

When mother started housekeeping the kitchen was large and roomy. It was still used for a dining and sitting room. The stove had a double oven, called so because it had oven doors on both sides and was very large. Matches came into use and the kerosene lamp. Instead of the bench, there was a wooden sink and this had a cupboard underneath to hold tools that came with the stove. These were much lighter in weight and so easier to handle. They were also more in number. The iron pots diminished in size and weight and were often porcelain lined. The spiders and griddles were legless and had short handles. The steam cooker was made of tin and was used to cook the fruit which was put into tin cans or stone jars. There were two shelves to it and it was also used for steaming other foods. It was built on the same plan as the steam cooker of today. The pantry shelves were always full of good things to eat. Yet mother had never of baking powder, raised flour

And had no essences of any kind. The receipt-book was made up of copied receipts that were dictated to her by her mother and friends. Cake, and hot pie was the favorite treat then. The cake receipts called for so much soda and cream of tartar. The spinning wheel and swift were no longer used, but mother was kept busy canning fruit in stone jars or tin cans. These were sealed by using hot sealing wax either made at home or bought at the store. Mother never felt satisfied with a meal for guests unless she could place before them cake of some kind and rich preserves of some sort. Though it took a long time to prepare a meal, as nothing could be bought already prepared. Father thought mother wise in teaching her girls the art with which she was so well acquainted.

The kitchen is still improving, since + some one has to spend a great deal of their waking hours in the kitchen, more thought is given to its furnishings and conveniences. It is no longer used for a sitting and dining room. The

China Cupboard may be reached with the same ease from the Kitchen as the dining room. The floor of the Kitchen is of hard pine well oiled. The windowpanes of large glass. The stove is replaced by the range which is used through the winter months. It is made of cast iron with finishings of white metal. The doors in front have isinglass. The heat is regulated by many dampers which is a great saving in fuel. One throws the heat on the oven; one on the movable reservoir; one allows the heat to go up the chimney. There is also a draft in front. The grate for fuel may be used for either wood or coal with equal convenience. It is so arranged that the ashes are turned into an ash pan that can be taken out of the stove.

When the oven door is open it forms a shelf on which to put the things that are to be taken from the oven. There are six covers on top and around the stove pipe is the warming oven with two doors. These open away from the pipe. Underneath this on each side are two shelves. These are small and used for the coffee pot

and small teakettle to rest on.

The gasoline stove used for summer cooking has three reconnected burners. No smoke, no odor no danger of its exploding. Neither does it need continual fixing. In the Atkinson Cooker, a recent invention, a single oil lamp furnishes the heat. It is an oven made of thick non-conducting material lined with tin. It has two perforated shelves. There is no danger of the food burning though it remain there for several hours. Soon the demand for this invention will be great. For by its use, the cook can take advantage of "equal suffrage" and the food will be cooking without the necessity of her immediate supervision. Thus enabling her to perform public services without slighting house duties. There are now two divisions to the tin lined sink which makes it much easier to clean. The wood or coal box is now furnished with a neat cover. This not only improves its outward appearance but also keeps out much trash that would otherwise slip.

in. Another great convenience is the refrigerator. This is an ornament to the room as well as a useful article of furniture. It is very prettily finished and the top may be used for a side board. as there are shelves, besides a good mirror. Inside it is lined through out, so that no filth or disease germs can find a resting place in it. This can be thoroughly cleaned easily. The kitchen table is almost perfect. Beside having a place for two kneading boards, it has hooks on one side for the glass rolling pin, spoons, egg beaters and the like. The japanned flour chest and the drawers for the small trial pans, the sugar, spices and essences, and the dried fruits and the baking powders all find a place here. The tanks for hot and cold water are much needed improvements. The bracket-lamps furnish light in the early morning and late evenings. The chairs are light and easily moved. The corner cupboard contains the iron stone china dishes that are used in preparing the food. The tools used in cooking have improved and are more

numerous than ever before. They are principally of granite, agate, steel or tin.

They are light, easy to handle, and to keep clean. Among them I will only mention a few. The coffee and tea pots are so arranged that the hot liquid is filtered through the coffee or tea much to the improvement of the drink. The cake pans are made so that they may be taken apart and leave the cake resting on the bottom of the pan to cool. The numerous wire baskets, so essential for foods that are cooked in hot fats, are finding almost universal demand from good cooks. The double boilers made from different material and in all sizes are used to cook the cereals in. The asbestos mats, though small, do not allow foods cooked in thin dishes to burn. The coffee mill not only grinds the coffee but keeps it from the air. The Enterprise meat grinder may be used to grind up bread and potatoes as well as meat. The vegetable masher, the flour sifter, and the many strainers are all necessary in a well furnished kitchen. Many are the helps

that the cook may use. Most of the printed receipt books are reliable and the monthly and weekly papers plan out the bill of fare for each week the entire year. The baking powder, the raised flour, the essences of all kinds are rich in reach of all. The canned goods of all kinds are of endless variety; are wholesome and cheap and all ready for use. There is no special dish that is characteristic of this time but all of the foods are made as light, dainty, and wholesome as possible. Condiments are generally used to make the food taste better. The different kinds of food are now used for the different seasons. The wholesome foods are kept in the pantry and in the refrigerator and put upon the table in courses. The cook may go to school and learn of the chemical values of foods and the proportions in which they should be used. For her success in cooking now depends on her knowledge of the constituents of her foods and the manner in which she combines them. The better the kitchen is furnished and the better educated the

cook is, the more satisfactory are the results from her cooking.

And now shall I attempt to picture the kitchen of the future? What shall we see? A room evidently planned by a woman. It is pleasantly situated, completely furnished, and conveniently arranged. Such a marvel of daintiness and neatness! So cosy and inviting. Artistic beauty and the genuinely practical blending in one harmonious whole governed by the strictest hygienic laws. Electricity a most willing servant; will be found. Aluminium dishes will feel themselves vulgarly common. The laboratory in connection with the kitchen will contain delicate and accurate scales, thermometers of various kinds, together with the best food testers. And over all presides as ever before the queen of the realm.

And more than ever before will her kitchen speak truly of her who rules there in. Happy her subjects if they truly feel that Paradise Lost is found.