



EDITED BY RUBY BASHFORD

USING CANNED GOODS

All sorts of reasons have been assigned as an explanation for the high prices demanded for all food commodities. Anyone who has a pet grievance against the government or the world in general has made haste to offer that as the one and only reason why living expenses are so high. Almost no one has forgotten to blame the women of the country, one way or another. A prominent grocer testified, not long since, that women were to blame for the high prices because they insisted on using the best and demanded so many canned goods.

Like all the other statements, this has its grain of truth. And, likewise, it has its other side, full of merit. For some women to use canned goods at all is an extravagance. For other women to use canned goods is a positive economy. It all depends on other circumstances which enter into the case. Not all women are compelled to practice rigid economy as far as their bank account is related to their expenses, but all should practice reasonable economy from principle. There are other forms of economy which at first glance do not concern money. There is economy of time and bodily strength and nerve force. One's relation to the family will often dictate an expenditure which is extravagant on its face, and the wisest economy at bottom.

The value of an attractive menu can not be overestimated as a factor in successful home making, and where would the housewife be without canned goods? So many things that are native to one part of our country would remain unknown to the rest of the world were it not for the canners' art. To be sure, people lived and died without the goods when they were not to be obtained, but that is no reason why we should do so, especially since they are valuable adjuncts in home building. What a boon canned goods are to the woman living miles from good markets! What would she do without canned goods? The only alternative is to live in a boarding house, which can never, under any circumstances, seem like home. And there she would be served with the same canned goods anyway.

One of the cleverest short stories written in recent years clustered around this question of canned goods. It resulted in a borrowed dinner, borrowed in order to deliver the unexpected guests from a sort of horror which the mere mention of canned goods produced in them. This was owing to the fact that the guests had lived for months on nothing but canned goods and far away from civilization. If the cook of the party had known just how to handle canned goods things might have gone better.

In the first place, use none but the recognized best brands. As a rule the cans are smooth and perfect. If they are dented in, however, you need not eye the can with suspicion on that account. It shows that there has been no fermentation inside to generate gas which causes the can to bulge outward. Beware of a can that has more than one mark of the soldering iron on the end of the can. It is almost certain to mean that the contents have fermented and an extra opening has been made to allow the gas to escape. In other respects the can will look all right. Be careful, too, of buying a can that is bulged out.

With the best brands there is practically no danger of ptomaine poisoning. In fact, there is more risk in using articles in the open market. Neither is there any unfailing way of detecting ptomaine poison, for it is the result of action by bacteria that have perished. Heat, no matter how intense, will never destroy the poison. This is found in fish more frequently than in other food and is more likely to be found in fish from a carelessly kept market than in a canned article, for the reason already stated, that the conditions under which first-class goods are put up are ideal. Ptomaine poison is frequently developed in the home after a can is opened. Under no circumstances allow the contents of the can to remain in the can even two

minutes after the can is opened. Transfer at once to an earthen or granite dish.

This prompt emptying of the can must not be confused with another process which is just as important but as different in its purpose as possible from the other process.

Pour the contents into a china or unchipped granite dish. Let the dish remain uncovered unless there is danger from insects. In that case put a fine sieve or screen high above the contents, but still covering. The object is to expose the contents to the air for a time in order to restore the oxygen which was removed by the sealing. Any sort of canned goods is better in taste for this airing. Of course there should be no high temperature nor should the dish be exposed too long. Half an hour is sufficient, especially if there is an occasional stirring of the mass so that the air can get to all parts.

If these directions are carried out and every detail of seasoning attended to there will be no need of complaining of canned goods. Often it is an improvement to cover vegetables with cold water and bring it very slowly to the boiling point and then drain and cover with fresh water. Experimenting for yourself will give you many a useful idea in the use of these time and labor savers.

SALMON CROQUETTES

One can salmon, free from bones, skin, etc., 6 tablespoons cracker crumbs, 1 raw egg, if too dry add 1 tablespoon sweet cream. Form into croquettes; roll in crumbs, then in egg and then in crumbs again. Let stand for two hours and fry in deep fat. Serve with following dressing:

DRESSING FOR CROQUETTES—Yolks of 2 hard-boiled eggs, 2 teaspoons butter, 1 teaspoon dry mustard, add vinegar and cook in double boiler until the consistency of cream. Stir constantly while cooking.

SALMON LOAF—Shred a large can of salmon fine, remove bones, skin, etc., and mix with the beaten yolks of two eggs and 6 tablespoons of bread crumbs. Beat the whites of the 2 eggs very light and stir into the mixture. Steam in buttered bread pan 1½ hours. Let get cold and slice. This should be served with slices of lemon. It makes a delightful luncheon or supper dish.

JELLIED CHICKEN—Dress and clean a four-pound fowl, cover with 2 quarts of cold water and add 4 slices of carrot, 1 sliced onion, 12 cloves, 2 stalks of celery broken into pieces, one-half teaspoonful of peppercorns and 1 tablespoonful of salt. Bring quickly to the boiling point and let simmer until meat is tender. Remove meat from bones and chop finely. Let stock simmer until reduced to three-fourths of a cupful, then cool and remove fat. Soak one teaspoonful of granulated gelatin in one teaspoonful of cold water and dissolve in stock which has been reheated. Add to meat and season with salt, pepper, celery-salt, lemon-juice and onion-juice. Pack solidly into a slightly-buttered one-pound baking-powder tin and chill. Remove from tin, cut in thin slices and arrange around lemon-jelly beaten with a silver fork until light.

TOMATO SALAD—Tomatoes cut in half, 1 large potato, mashed; yolk of 1 egg, 3 tablespoons olive oil, 1 tablespoon vinegar, salt and pepper to taste. Mix all together and serve on tomatoes. Serve all on lettuce leaves.

ICED JELLIED BOUILLON—Make beef bouillon or a consommé, and clear it with egg white and shell. To each quart of the hot bouillon add one tablespoonful of granulated gelatin soaked until soft in half a cupful of cold water. When the gelatin is dissolved, strain into an earthen bowl. Let it cool and then put it in the refrigerator for twelve hours. Carefully skim off any fat, when it should be a perfectly clear jelly, ice cold. To serve, take it up in a small after-dinner coffee spoon and half fill bouillon cups.

FINISHING FLOORS

The beauty of the hardwood floor is becoming so thoroughly appreciated that it would be futile to comment upon it, and so for the benefit of those who are building new homes or having old floors refinished we will give a few well tested methods that have proved very satisfactory.

If you desire an especially fine finish on an oak floor, the following treatment is recommended: First see that the surface is both clean and smooth, and apply a good paste filler, taking care to remove all surplus filler after it has begun to harden and just before it is ready to "set."

Paste filler can be purchased from any paint dealer, and is easily applied. It should be put on with a coarse brush and the surplus removed with a rag, excelsior or mineral wool before it becomes hard. Twenty-four hours later the floor must be carefully sanded and wiped clean with a damp cloth so that no dust will be left in the varnish. Apply a coat of white gum-shellac varnish evenly, and when dry lightly sandpaper and dust. A second coat can be put on as soon as the first is perfectly hard, generally in twenty-four hours, although it is safer to wait two or three days, especially if the weather is damp.

The result will be a gloss finish. If a polished surface is desired it can be obtained by rubbing with rottenstone and olive oil. If a waxed surface is wanted the surface must not be disturbed for twenty-four hours, when it should be lightly sanded and treated to a coat of floor wax. Subsequent coats of wax are applied as occasion requires. Polish after each application of wax with a floor polishing machine.

No attempt should ever be made to finish any floor until it has been thoroughly cleaned and sanded.

If your floors are yellow pine or maple they may, without preliminary treatment other than cleaning, be waxed with any of the good waxes by following the instructions which accompany them.

A cheap and effective oil finish for ordinary kitchen floors of soft pine or spruce is made as follows: To one gallon of light paraffine oil, heated in a water bath almost to the boiling point, add half a pound of paraffine, which has been melted in a ladle, stirring vigorously to prevent the mixture becoming lumpy as it cools. Apply this oil to the floor with a brush, wiping off the surplus as soon as possible with a woolen rag. The operation should be repeated until the floor seems to be thoroughly saturated, when no further treatment will be needed for three or four months, except to mop it occasionally with a dry woolen rag.

Hardwood floors of yellow pine or maple can be finished in a similar manner but with a different preparation. Mix half a gallon of boiled linseed oil, one quart of benzine and one quart of kerosene, and apply with a brush. A second and third coat may follow as soon as previous coats have had time to soak in.

A floor treated in this manner can be kept clean by wiping it with a moistened cloth occasionally.

An old floor may be cleaned and sanded. The largest cracks and tack holes filled with a good crack filler and treated like a new floor or two coats of good paint may be applied and a couple of coats of varnish. This makes a very presentable floor, is easily taken care of and will wear for a long time without refinishing.

If you wish to put an egg into dried beef or codfish gravy or any kind of dressing that has to be boiled, beat your egg, then put two or three tablespoonfuls of cold water with it and stir it, and then stir all into the gravy briskly while boiling. This makes it smooth with no pieces of egg in.

In addition to a few drops of lemon to a glass of iced tea add a sprig of mint. This makes a cooling and refreshing drink.

THE CHEAPER CUTS OF MEAT

I con with care the magazines,
The household columns meet my eyes,
All filled with helpful "ways and means"
How best we may economize,
Since food has soared to heights sublime
How apropos is each receipt
Which teaches in this parlous time
The use of "cheaper cuts of meat."

For sirloin steak I need not sigh,
From costly chops I must desist,
The choice rib-roast forbear to buy,
And on the chuck and shin subsist.
I thus may save my household hoard
These days when dollars' wings are fleet,
And live as well as any lord
Upon the cheaper cuts of meat.

Alas, I found this all too true
When I to purchase did essay;
The butchers read those pages, too—
They've raised the price without delay!
No fruit the frugal counsels yield,
My disappointment is complete,
The bitter truth is now revealed,
There are no "cheaper cuts" of meat!

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