

Home Course In Domestic Science

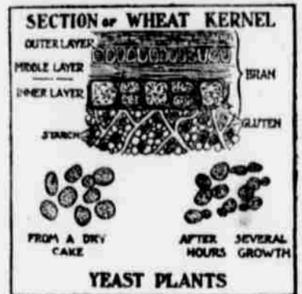
XI.—The Process of Breadmaking.

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NEXT to milk there is no food more generally used by civilized nations than bread. To the average housekeeper there is probably no part of the regular cooking more important or worthy of her best attention than breadmaking. To be able to make a well risen, good flavored, well baked loaf of wheat bread is the goal of the young aspirant for culinary fame. One has only to attend county fairs, farmers' institutes and meetings of other organizations where pantry stores and baked goods are entered in contest to see quickly that it is in the bread that the greatest interest centers. And all this is as it should be, for bread is one of our best staple foods. With the addition of a little butter or eaten with a glass of milk, it furnishes a nutritious, well balanced diet upon which one could subsist and maintain good health for an indefinite length of time, provided one did not weary of the sameness.

With a practical knowledge of certain principles governing alcoholic fermentation as produced in breadmaking, also some knowledge of the difference in flours, and with careful at-



Attention to these points, breadmaking is really a very simple process. Without this knowledge or attention there will ever be mystery and uncertainty about it, and there will always be different results.

There are only four ingredients absolutely necessary for the making of a loaf of raised wheat bread. They are good bread flour, fresh yeast, liquid—either milk or water—and salt. Other ingredients are often used, but they are not necessary. For instance, shortening is sometimes added. This makes a richer loaf. Sugar, too, may be used in small quantity. This hastens the growth of the yeast plants. Potato water occasionally replaces the milk or water and makes a moist loaf, while potatoes and hop water form a mixture in which the yeast colonies are quickly started. But good bread can be made without the addition of any of these things.

Flour Used in Breadmaking.

In order that we may have a well raised light loaf it is necessary to use a flour containing a large per cent of gluten. This is the flour made from the so called "hard" wheats. Such flour has less water than the flour made from the "soft" wheat, therefore, mixed with a liquid, gives a larger loaf. Gluten is a grayish, rubber-like substance found in flour after the starch has been washed out. It is the "glue" obtained from chewing a handful of wheat, as known by most people who have spent their childhood in the country. This very character of gluten makes it necessary in breadmaking. It stretches and stretches, forming little pockets in which the gas is retained in the loaf until it is baked. The heat of the oven hardens the gluten quickly before it has had time to relax, and the loaf keeps its puffed shape.

Good bread flour should be white, with just a suggestion of yellow. After being pressed in the hand it should fall loosely apart. If it keeps the impress of the palm or remains in lumps it has too much moisture. When rubbed between the thumb and finger there should be a slight grittiness; it should not feel too smooth or powdery.

What is Yeast?

This useful agent in breadmaking is as old as the hills, and its action is better understood when one is familiar with it. Yeast is a microscopic plant, consisting of a single round or oval cell. The rapidity with which it grows and reproduces itself gives it much of its importance. It reproduces either by sending out buds which break off as new plants or by forming spores which will grow into new plants under favorable conditions.

Like all plants, yeast requires heat, moisture and food in order to grow. The degree of heat at which it grows best is from 75 to 90 degrees, and this is the temperature at which bread should be kept throughout the process of making. If it were not for the liquid used in breadmaking the yeast would not have sufficient moisture and would not grow any more than it does in the dry cake.

The food of the yeast plant is sugar,

particularly a white one, is hard on the eyes and becomes very monotonous. Wall paper is not a desirable covering for a kitchen wall because it absorbs moisture and odors and cannot be cleaned satisfactorily.

For the floor the best covering is linoleum. This to my mind is better than the polished floor, which is always slippery and is hard on the feet. Then there is the painted floor, which has both advantages and disadvantages, chief among the latter being not very durable qualities. The kitchen floor should not be covered with carpet, because that is insanitary, neither should it be devoid of any covering and so require scrubbing. This is one of the items of work which should be eliminated from the housekeeper's schedule. The white enameled floors, tables, etc., are attractive to the eye and a joy to a certain type of housekeeper, but they represent too much energy and labor to be included in modern methods. Floors should be covered with some material easily cleaned, and tables, sinks, shelves, etc., should be painted or covered with zinc, tile or oilcloth. The zinc table and the sink are a lasting pleasure and lessen work to such an extent that they soon more than pay for the initial cost.

Kitchen Furniture.

This should be simple, durable and adequate for the needs of the housekeeper. The kind and number of pieces will largely depend on the character of the home. But in every kitchen there should be a good range, at least one work table and a convenient sink supplied with running water and modern plumbing. These three articles should be near neighbors because they are so frequently used at the same time.

Whatever the fuel—coal, wood, gas or gasoline—it should be burned in a good range, one that is perfect in all its parts and equipped with a good baking oven. No part of the housefurnishing is more important than the kitchen stove and no piece of farm machinery, however necessary, should be bought by sacrificing the new stove, since the preparation of food for the table is an absolute necessity in every home, the stove, whatever its style, should be as good as any part of the equipment of the entire establishment.

The work table should be high enough that the worker need not stand in an uncomfortable position while ironing or baking. Kitchen tables are made thirty inches high, which is not enough for a woman five feet six inches in height, and to bend over it, as she always must, results in an unnecessary weariness or backache. Either the low table should be set upon supports or a higher one should be ordered. The high stool is a simple piece of furniture which should be in every kitchen. It can be slipped under the work table when not in use and is a convenient seat while preparing vegetables, ironing and doing the numberless other tasks which can be performed sitting just as well as standing.

A clock is necessary in the kitchen also a pair of strong scissors, a pin cushion with pins and some coarse needles and thread, both white and black. These are constantly needed, and it makes unnecessary steps to be obliged to go to the living room for them. It is hardly possible to have too many drawers, shelves and cupboards, and yet these ought not to be used to encourage disorderliness. There is sometimes a temptation to hide away things in cupboards or drawers that would better be destroyed at once than have them add to the task of straightening up later on.

The modern kitchen may have other useful pieces of furniture in addition to the above, if there is money enough to provide them. Among these may be mentioned a water or electric motor or even a small one horsepower gas engine, any one of which will run the washing machine mangle, churn, cream separator and can be attached to the sewing machine. This little contrivance is not so expensive that it need be excluded from even moderate homes, considering the amount of work it will accomplish and the strength it will save. When a woman is obliged to do all her housework it ought certainly to be counted as one of the necessities. The kitchen cabinet with separate compartments for all kinds of groceries and supplies is sometimes preferred to the pantry. It is entirely a matter of personal preference which should be chosen, for both are most convenient. Reasonable care must, however, be taken not to leave groceries lying about loosely in the cabinet, for these will attract insects as well as mice. But the housekeeper endowed with even the most ordinary degree of order may easily avoid such a misfortune.

The electric or gasoline iron is a handy little appliance for making kitchen work lighter and is inexpensive when usefulness and labor saving qualities are balanced with dollars and cents. In the country, of course, the gasoline iron is generally the only one possible, but these have now been brought to a degree of perfection that makes them satisfactory.

The Use of the Kitchen.

One last important point to remember in furnishing a kitchen is that its real purpose is a workroom, not a living or dining room. A workroom should have its tools conveniently arranged within easy reach of the workman. All utensils and evidences of kitchen work should not be kept in other parts of the house or stowed away in obscure places in order that the room may be presentable when strangers come. The modern kitchen is not intended to fill the place of a reception room, and only in exceptional cases should it be used as a dining room.

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FINAL SETTLEMENT NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given to all creditors and others interested in the estate of Glover Harris, deceased, that I, the undersigned, intend to make final settlement of the estate of said deceased at the next term of the probate court of Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, to be held at Jackson, Missouri, beginning on the 14th day of November, 1910.
BERTHA HARRIS, Administratrix

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS

Notice is hereby given that proposals will be received by the undersigned until 12 o'clock on Monday, November 14th, 1910, for tearing down and removing from the public square the old county jail building at Jackson. Proposals will be received; 1st, the bidder to take all the material and remove same forthwith; 2nd, to wreck or tear down the building, and cells and the material to remain the property of the county.

All bids to be opened by the county court, reserving the right to reject any or all bids.
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