

HOUSEHOLD

MRS. S. C. BUTCHER

Communications for this department may be sent to Mrs. S. C. Butcher, Ellensburg, Wash., or direct to The Ranch. All questions will be carefully answered; contributions for publication are welcome.

Care of the Broom.

Many housekeepers, who are economical and careful of most articles pertaining to the household, abuse their brooms shamefully. A broom may be made to last much longer if properly cared for. In the first place, select a broom which is made of fine, even straw, of a greenish tint. That which is yellow had become dead ripe before it was harvested or broken. This will generally be found coarser. Be sure that the brush is a natural green, and not colored. When sweeping, do not push the broom ahead of you, but draw it towards you in even strokes without bearing heavily upon it. Keep the brush level upon the floor, as leaning the broom handle towards you bends the brush over and soon it has all run to a sharp point at one side, making it almost entirely worthless. After sweeping a few strokes turn the broom with the other side toward you. If you have a tendency to run a broom over this will help to keep it straight. When through sweeping, stand the broom upon its handle, or better still, make a small hole through the handle and insert a string loop, by which the broom may be hung up when not in use. It is surprising how much expense may be saved by a little care and the "careful habit" is easily formed. [Another thing to guard against is the tendency to permit the broom to stand or hang near the stove or the hot-water tank. This soon destroys the vitality of the straw, making it brittle and easily broken. Put the broom in a cool place.—Ed.]

Bread and Toast.

Toast is a favorite article of diet, especially with English-speaking races, being quite commonly considered more digestible, and, by many, more palatable than untoasted bread. A similar article, zweiback, enjoys much the same position in the diet of the Germans and some other races.

H. Snyder, at the Minnesota experiment station, studied the comparative composition and digestibility of bread and toast. The bread was made from straight-grade patent flour, and the toast was prepared from the bread after it was twelve hours old. It was first dried in the oven and then toasted in the usual way with a wire toaster. Prof. Snyder found that the main difference between bread and toast, as regards chemical composition, was in the water content, the toast being much drier than the bread owing to an evaporation of water during the process of toasting.

As regards changes in the nutritive value due to toasting, it appeared that the character of the nutrients, particularly the carbohydrates, was more markedly affected than the percentage amounts. The heat employed changed a part of the starch to dextrin, a soluble carbohydrate. On the other hand, the proteids were changed to less soluble compounds.

Digestion experiments were made with man on a diet of bread and milk, and toast and milk, which showed that on an average 87.1 per cent of the protein of the bread was digested, as compared with 84.7 per cent in the case of the toast. As regards the digestibility of carbohydrates, the two rations were much alike, somewhat over 97 per cent being digestible in both cases. A similar agreement was found in the case of energy, over 91 per cent of that supplied by both rations being available for the needs of the body. These values show nothing of the rate or comparative ease of digestion, but these points were studied by artificial

digestion experiments, in which bread and toast were submitted to the action of malt diastase. Under uniform conditions, in a given time, 14.68 per cent of the starch of bread was rendered soluble or digested, as compared with 21.38 per cent in the case of toast. In other words, the starch of toast, i. e., the principal nutrient in it, is apparently more readily digested than the starch of bread.

The fact that toast is somewhat more readily but not quite as completely digested as bread does not detract from its value as a food for invalids and others who require a sterilized food, but it suggests that, as far as the availability of the nutrients concerned, the bread is to be preferred to the toast.

School Lunches.

Children living in the country must of necessity carry their lunches with them to school, and it is no easy task to prepare lunches for every day, in the school year, without giving the same things so often that they become very monotonous to the child. The lunches should be prepared the day before. Study to make it as attractive and appetizing as possible. Have a clean bright tin pail for each child and a fresh napkin in each pail. So many children have no appetite when attending school and they must be tempted to eat. I have seen children go to their play at the noon hour without tasting their food and when seeing later, what had been prepared for them to eat I did not wonder they left it untouched, a few pieces of bread and butter and some pickles, was all that had been put up for them, no napkin and not even a cloth in the bottom of the pail. If napkins are not at hand a nice clean piece of white muslin may take its place.

Bread must, of course, be a part of the lunch each day but even that may be varied by making sandwiches. The bread should be cut thin. Any nice tender meat sliced very thin makes a good filling for sandwiches, as does fresh fish (boned), pressed chicken, grated cheese with a light dressing of mustard, or the yolks of hard boiled eggs, mashed fine, with a little dressing also split raisins make a delicate filling. A little fresh fruit should be used every day and occasionally a slice of nice sponge cake or a piece of gingerbread and a few pickles may be added.

"Arranging for Vegetable Salads."

In country places, where lettuce cannot be obtained in the winter, chopped celery and apples with French dressing make an exceedingly nice salad, or finely chopped cabbage and apples, or chopped cabbage and celery, or even cabbage with celery seed. One good solid head of cabbage should make at least five meals for a family of two. It should be marked into fifths the portion required for one meal taken out, and the rest of the head kept as compact as possible or it will dry and lose its color. In buying lettuce, which at certain seasons of the year is rather expensive, the inside white part may be used one day for salad and the green or outside part be mixed with celery and apples for the next. The water in which chicken was boiled may have noodles added to it for soup. When buying mutton the shoulder is perhaps the cheapest and best for a small family. The first day have it boiled. Save the water in which it was boiled to use for soups and sauces the day following. As a clear tomato soup will be better to serve on the day on which you have the mutton the meat which is left over may be divided and made into three dishes, at least. Cecils and mutton curry with rice make exceedingly nice luncheon dishes, while mutton pie with biscuit crust makes a good dinner dish.

Graham Pudding.

One cupful of raisins seeded and chopped fine. One cupful of molasses,

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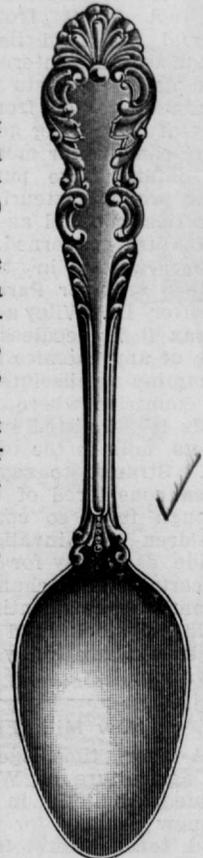
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one teaspoonful soda dissolved in a scant cupful of sweet milk, half a teaspoonful of salt, one cupful wheat flour, steam two hours. Add spices as desired.

Spice Cake.

One cupful of light brown sugar, one-half cupful of butter, two large eggs, beaten separately, one-half teaspoonful soda, one teacupful of chopped raisins, one teaspoonful of cloves, one teaspoonful of cinnamon, a little grated nutmeg; add flour enough to make a stiff batter. Bake in one loaf.

Sore Throat.

When the cold weather comes on do not begin wrapping the throat too closely. It will be noticed that the persons who use the heaviest scarfs around their necks are almost invariably the ones who suffer most with sore throat. This arises from the fact that the heavy wrappings make the neck and shoulders too warm, the clothing becomes dampened with perspiration and when the wraps are removed one is sure to catch cold. When the throat is sore wet one end of a towel in cold water and fold around the throat covering the wet portion with the dry end. Apply just before going to bed at night and remove in the morning. Gargle the throat with cold water in which a little baking soda is dissolved. The throat will be well in the morning. If the neck and throat are washed frequently in cold water there will not be much danger of sore throat.

Care of the Dish Cloth.

What is so offensive looking as a soiled, dirty dish cloth? Besides being unsightly they are dangerous, disease and death lurk in their folds. If they are allowed to lie in an uncleaned condition they become the breeding places of disease germs, and emit a poisonous odor. In fact it will become like the neglected kitchen sink, a hotbed of disease. Those who do not know the laws of health and hygiene do not realize how great is the danger. Keep on hand plenty of clean cloths and when one begins to look the worse for wear, burn it and take another. The dish cloth should never be laid aside when one is through using it, but it should be thoroughly washed with soap, rinsed in hot water to

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