

Homemaking As a Business

The Young Housekeeper Must Learn to Do Things by Schedule

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"NO woman can make a success of her business unless she knows why she is running it and the ideals she wishes to follow. The clearer the woman's ideals the better the home maker she will be."

Every bride looks forward to the pleasure of entertaining her friends at dinner or luncheon. This implies a knowledge and skill in cooking. She may have the knowledge but lacks experience. This may be due to the method of instruction she received. If at school, she may have been assigned but one dish to cook during the entire lesson; if at home, she may have relied too much on her mother for assistance. As a hostess in her own home she faces a new proposition.

She learns that her day's schedule allows for recreation hours only when she knows how to plan for them. She finds that her working hours take up too much of her time. She hears "housework is never done" from all sides of her, but with true Canadian spirit she adopts the modern efficiency slogan, "Avoid wasted movements."

One of the first ways to do this is to know her subject,—homemaking. Let her begin her education in this seriously, giving it as much study, interest, attention and devotion as she gave to whatever occupation was hers before marriage.

There are lectures, books and magazines, on homemaking which are helpful to those interested in home economics. Then there is the help she may get from experienced cooks. Here, however, are pitfalls for her. Many experienced cooks ridicule the use of measuring utensils and scoff at the expense of following a cook book. They have acquired the knack of cooking in some charmed way but they have not the ability to transmit their skill to others. How frequently a bride deplores the fact that she cannot cook like her mother! History repeats itself and if her mother's diary could only be unearthed it might reveal some interesting culinary secrets.

All domestic science experts use measuring utensils; a graduated cup of glass, tin or aluminum divided into quarters and thirds is an imperative necessity. The expert always demands level and exact measurements. Many people prefer baker's cake and bread to the home-made product, giving as their reason that they are uniformly good. They do not realize that the cause of their being uniformly good is,—the baker uses exact measurements.

A Reliable Cook Book

AS cook book recipes are always planned on exact and level measurements, it is advisable to own a first class cook book and follow its directions conscientiously. She will find in it no haphazard directions like "half butter and half lard; about the size of an egg;" or "2½ cups of flour, cup of ordinary size."

Some of the recipes in the cook book may be expensive but, unless she knows a little of the science of substitution, it is well to be chary about changing the recipe. Ingredients must be kept in proportion and if one substance is replaced by another, the same amount may not be used.

Lard, any vegetable fat, beef fat, or oleomargarine are common substitutes for butter in cake-making. If one-half cupful of butter is called for in the recipe, she may meet the fat requirements by using one tablespoonful less of lard, that is, seven tablespoonfuls, or six and one-half tablespoonfuls of vegetable fat, or four tablespoonfuls of beef fat, provided one-half of a teaspoonful of salt is added in each instance. Oleomargarine may be used in the same proportion as butter.

Bread flour may be used in cake-making instead of pastry flour, provided she deducts two tablespoonfuls of it from each cup used. Some cooks acquire a flour superior to pastry flour by substituting two tablespoonfuls of corn starch for the two tablespoonfuls of bread flour removed. Soda and cream of tartar may be used instead of baking powder, if she uses one part of

soda to two parts of cream of tartar, the total amount of both to equal the amount of baking powder in the recipe. Sour milk or buttermilk may be substituted for sweet milk provided she uses one-fourth teaspoonful of soda per cup. This, however, has the effect of reducing the amount of baking powder one teaspoonful. For instance, if the recipe calls for the use of two teaspoonfuls of baking powder with sweet milk and she uses sour milk, she must use but one teaspoonful of baking powder as the soda used is equivalent to the other teaspoonful of baking powder. Potato or rice water reserved after the potatoes or rice has been boiled, may be used instead of milk. If she modifies a recipe in order to use a cupful of nuts she must reduce the amount of fat one and one-half teaspoonfuls, as one cup of nuts is equivalent to that amount of fat.

There should be a place in her cook book to note economical substitutions and reliable recipes. Many cooks use the margins of the pages. If a cake recipe is to be added it is written on the margin of a page devoted to cake recipes and given a page number in the index. This saves trouble in locating it a second time.

Another method to improve the cook book is to note near the recipe the number of minutes required to cook, the character of the oven heat, the quantity the recipe will make and the number of minutes it takes for the preparation. For example, on the margin of the page near the recipe for gingerbread she notes twenty minutes cooking, moderate oven, one-half recipe makes eight muffins, fifteen minutes preparation.

The silent part of every cook book is that part which makes no mention of the time it takes to prepare a particular dish. When she has discovered the importance of knowing exactly how long it takes to prepare respective dishes she will have very little trouble with late or hurried meals.

Proper Utensils

SHE must not overlook the value of using proper utensils in her work. The shape and dimensions of a pan may seriously affect the quality of a loaf of bread. A pan 7½ by 4¼ by 3 inches deep is the best size for bread. Her cake tin, new and shiny, will yield "sad" cakes until it is dulled. This is done by greasing it with any unsalted fat and allowing it to bake until it has acquired a bluish tinge. It may be used at first for baking apples or preparing Franconia potatoes, for, unless it is seasoned, it is treacherous for cake-making.

Aluminum utensils take longer to boil liquids than any other metal, but once the liquid acquires the boiling temperature the gas may be lowered to almost the vanishing point. This is of great advantage when using a double boiler. The capacity of aluminum for high temperatures, however, is a handicap in oven cookery which favors the more moderate temperatures of casserole dishes.

An iron kettle and its accompanying frying basket are great aids in deep fat frying and a heavy iron pan is the best utensil for frying meat.

One-pound baking powder cans may be utilized for making Boston Brown Bread and the open end of a half-pound or quarter-pound can may be appropriate for a biscuit cutter. Tooth picks, buttered, in order to penetrate easily, may be employed as skewers.

Observation will teach her a great deal;—her scoop holds two cupfuls of flour; fourteen medium sized apples make one-quarter peck; two good sized potatoes, boiled, make one cupful of mashed potatoes; rice swells to five times its normal size when boiled; any scalloped dish is more successful with but two layers; pastry is improved by having all the ingredients thoroughly chilled before mixing; any unsalted fat is superior to butter in greasing pans; the temperature of melted butter should be lowered before adding to gingerbread or muffin batter, otherwise the batter will be coarse-grained instead of smooth and velvety.

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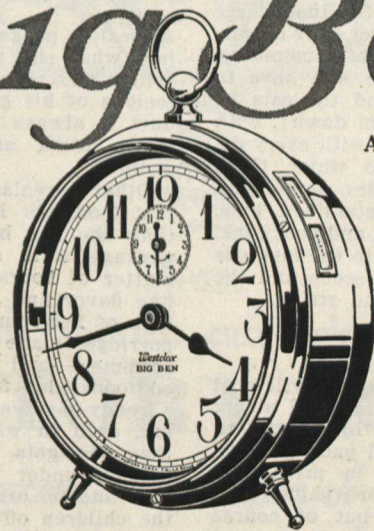
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