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door, with a stone-walled area for the outside stairs. Have the walls slope from the top of the cellar wall outward five or six feet, to a point about three or four inches above the ground-level. Put in broad plank steps, easy of ascent, and floor this area with cement or brick, so that the rubbish that is sure to drift in can be easily removed. Cover in the area with a substantial two-leaved trap-door. This excludes rain in summer and snow and cold in the winter, and gives easy and comfortable entrance and exit all the year round. This is a consideration when barrels, boxes, bags and other large, clumsy articles have to be taken up and down. The door also aids much in cleaning and ventilating the cellar, as it facilitates removal of rubbish, and, by leaving it open, the place can be thoroughly wind-swept. If a drain be necessary, see that it is efficient, and that it remains so. If you wish to save money, cement your floor right at the start. You can then keep the cellar healthful

and clean with little effort. Be sure to have depth enough—not less than 7½ feet below the joists; as the cement will take up several inches, you will have to allow this extra amount. This floor is durable, can be swept and washed off, and in summer can be flooded with water and the whole house bathed in a cool, moist air, which will prove very grateful in the hot, dry days that are so trying.

The inside stairs should be of heavy plank, solidly built, and with an easy slope. The steps should be broad and not too high, in order to secure sure footing and to minimize labor in going up and down. Many a fall, with consequent illness and often lasting injury, can be laid to the charge of narrow, ill-built cellar steps. The stairs should open into the kitchen by a door that is from the closet. The old hole in the floor is well named "a trap." It is a menace to life and limb, as well as unsightly and insanitary.

(To be continued.)

About the House.

CEREAL FOODS FOR BREAKFAST.

The history of the use of oatmeal, cracked wheat and corn meal as porridge extends over many centuries; but the prepared food, "fully cooked and predigested," is almost a twentieth-century product.

A few years ago (1902), in the laboratory of the Inland Revenue Department, several of the more common of these foods were analyzed, to see to what extent they were really all they claimed to be—not with regard to wholesomeness, but to see if the extravagant claims made and the high prices asked for them were made justifiable by increased nutrition, palatability and digestibility. The result of the investigation is given in Bulletin No. 84, Inland Revenue Department. Six of the best known of the prepared foods were compared with rolled oats, oatmeal, pea meal, common corn meal and golden corn meal. In reply to the query, Which of all these breakfast foods is the best value from the point of view of nutrition? the answer was: "Provided the article is served in such a way as to render it fully digestible, then, from a consideration alone of the energy derived from it, there is very little to choose between them." The prepared foods were more soluble in cold water than the uncooked meals; but, since we cook porridge to render the starch contained more soluble, the question becomes one of time and fuel. Whether we can afford to pay the prices asked for the prepared foods, in preference to buying the raw material and cooking it at home, is a question each housekeeper must answer for herself.

In regard to protein, pea meal has nearly twice as much as any of the other foods: oatmeal, rolled oats, Ralston's Breakfast Food, grape-nuts and malt breakfast food all contain about equal quantities of protein. But pea meal, as we know, is not easily digested, therefore it cannot take the highest place as a food. In regard to fat, oatmeal and rolled oats stand highest, corn meal a little lower, and all the rest much lower. The analyst sums up by saying: "On the whole, I am of the opinion that, as a well-balanced material for porridge, these analytical results justify me in claiming a very high if not the highest place for oatmeal, especially in the form of rolled oats." Of course, even this is not final judgment, as there is still much to investigate and learn of the value of cereals as food.

The prepared foods come either ready for use or with all directions as to how to prepare them, but there may be new ideas, some in the following method of cooking the most ordinary meal.

A very useful and necessary utensil for the cooking of cereal foods is a double boiler. These come in all sizes, and

not go without one on account of the cost, for the price of one is soon paid for by the material saved. With a double boiler, there should be less than a tablespoonful of material wasted each meal (can that be said of the old method of cooking?), and there is no need of ever scorching any. But for those who find the ordinary boiler of little use for other cooking, one can improvise a boiler by getting a small granite kettle that drops well down into the stove, have a basin that fits tightly in the top of this, and a granite pie-plate makes a good cover. This style of boiler is especially useful in summer, when a small fire (especially if wood is used) is most desirable.

Oatmeal (granulated) needs much cooking, three hours being not too long; but by soaking in cold water before putting over the fire, one aids the process considerably. Rolled or flaked oats can be cooked in half an hour, but longer cooking improves both flavor and digestibility. This long cooking is best accomplished by preparing the porridge in the evening and allowing it to cook as long as the fire lasts. In the morning, see that there is water in the lower vessel, draw to the front of the stove, and leave until breakfast. If the lid be removed for five minutes before serving, it will allow the steam to dry off.

Granulated Oats.—Put one quart cold water in the top vessel, sift in one cup meal and 1 teaspoon salt. Stir only enough to wet the meal. Partly fill the lower vessel with boiling water and set the top part into it, cover, and let cook for as long as is convenient.

Rolls Oats.—One and a half pints of water is sufficient for one cup of meal. Use either cold or boiling water, and put in the salt with the meal. Do not stir after the meal is once wet.

Corn meal is also better for at least three hours' cooking.

Boiled Corn-meal Mush.—Mix a pint of meal with a pint of cold water or milk, and stir the mixture carefully into a quart of boiling water; add one teaspoon salt, and cook in a double boiler. The meal may be sifted in dry, but it is not easy to keep free of lumps. Corn-meal mush may be baked in a covered dish set in a pan of hot water in the oven. Cracked wheat should be soaked over night in cold water, then cooked at least one hour; or, it may be cooked in the evening, and warmed over. One cup wheat requires one quart water and one teaspoon salt.

Wheat germ, wheat grits, wheat-leets, and several other names, are all applied to a fine meal made from the heart of wheat. This also requires one quart of boiling water (be sure it is boiling rapidly) to each cup of meal. Sift the meal in carefully and stir rapidly, to avoid lumps. Cook at least 20 minutes; more does no harm. A nice flavor can be given to wheat-germ porridge by adding a tablespoon of grape-



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