

ARTISTIC KITCHENS.

Beautiful Rooms Where the Meals of Millionaires Are Cooked.

AN IDEAL KITCHEN IN FRANCE.

Exquisite Appointments and Utensils of the Vanderbilt Kitchen.

COOKING BY STEAM, GAS AND CHARCOAL.

(WRITTEN FOR THE DISPATCH.)

The most ideal kitchen I ever saw was at Escamp, famous for its Benedictine and Beneficences of blessed memory. We had stopped over to take another diligence. The waiting room, which was also dining room, was too roomy for us, so, instead of dining, we decided to take tea. So, impelled by the natural instinct after a more agreeable environment, I reached the kitchen.

The change from the grim, weary waiting room, to this airy, spacious kitchen, filled with gaiety and color, had the enchantment of a transformation scene. The three large French windows were wine-wreathed. The range was framed in with scriptural tile, and a split string with bows, which sprang before an open fire. An annex to the range also framed in with blue tiles was filled with holes, each requiring one charcoal flame and to be used as the service press.

Against the walls and over doors and in panels, copper, brass and tin, arranged with much skill as if they were articles of arms, and burnished to the last degree of brilliancy. Long handled frying pans, like unstrung banjos, were graded down to baby pans for a single egg without a missing link, and copper measures, in like manner, seemed to go off toward a vanishing point.

Many of these were beautifully wrought with incised ornament. I will not attempt to describe the personal attractions of the kitchen, the descriptions which were cook, maid and good fellowship which abundantly made the kitchen a rite of the wine room, for we are about more serious business. The Norman kitchens of the humbler sort with which we became familiar were all dressed with soft colors, pale yellow, pink, etc., probably to the fact that there were largely living rooms, and will always be remembered as among the most artistic rooms I have ever seen.

LIGHT AND CLEANLINESS.

"Perfect ventilation," said Mr. George Post, the architect, who is regarded as an authority on the subject of kitchens, "is the first consideration in a kitchen; then come light and the possibilities of perfect cleanliness."

To get these in a crowded city block and half buried in the earth, is, in the view of Post, the most difficult problem. Vanderbilt's kitchen was the first of the evolutionary series which Mr. Post inaugurated. It is a large room, 33 x 16. There are three windows on Fifty-seventh street, and these are horizontal bars, from which hang the long-handled copper pans which the nimble cooks use with the rapidity and ease of the nimble hands.

To the waiter, always in anguish between the wrath of the hungry man and the hot toe of the cook, the kitchen is the top of the house. He is saving grace. The cook and leading against the dumb waiter while his hands descend gets a few seconds to brace himself up to meet the thundering blow of his client in the brilliant restaurant. The spit and the upright grate make the one luxury that private kitchens, however unpretentious, should try to afford. And as the eastern conventions here I meet many of those cowboys of 15 years ago who are now cattle kings and known as men of culture and wealth, and who are sought after still.

SAVING SPACE.

Every piece of furniture in the kitchen has a special definite purpose to fulfill. The brazen butchers occupy one corner with their battle axes. The pastry cooks practice with their knives kept within their sleeves. Even the waiter is compelled to save space and time. Above each range are horizontal bars, from which hang the long-handled copper pans which the nimble cooks use with the rapidity and ease of the nimble hands.

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The Texas cowboy is almost always a gentleman. I do not mean that he always has the polish of a Chesterfield or the acquired suavity in mode of an elegant Crofton. I mean that he is a quiet, quiet, simple soul, ready to appeal for assistance, the avowed slave and defender of a woman's name and honor. And he is not so awkward in a drawing room as would suppose, as he goes there more frequently than some of those who would suppose.

HIS MANNER OF DRESS.

On the trail the cowboy is rough of dress. Going through brush and thorns and out in rain and storm as he has to do, the cowboy needs clothing which will not tear and will turn water and keep out cold or heat.

He wears a wide-brimmed hat, with the hair out, serves both purposes, and the Texas cowboy adopted this as a kind of overalls to put over his trousers. He wears a broad-brimmed hat so as to protect him from the sun and rain.

The cowboy wears tremendous spurs, and sometimes he doesn't wear any. And as the eastern conventions here I meet many of those cowboys of 15 years ago who are now cattle kings and known as men of culture and wealth, and who are sought after still.

THE COOK'S THRONE.

This is a noble room, with windows that catch the light of the moon and the last rays of his golden sister, and command the distant prospect right and left. No man will envy the cook her private domain, mind, that the saving of gas bills is a great saving.

Something was said last week of the range. The range is situated in the remote corner of the room in order to be near the main ventilating shaft of the house. A narrow doorway is all that separates the kitchen from the dining room, where all the steam and odors pass it through without losing a single smoky atom of the house. This is an immense advantage to everyone. Living in the city houses are now longer in the scent of perpetual dinner known.

The range is in fact two ranges separated by a partition. These are built out from the wall and behind are two horizontal boilers. Attached at one end is the chimney, which is built of iron. The chimney consists of a low grate with a spit attached to a jack moved by clockwork, and a semi-circular Dutch oven. Of course for ordinary occasions but one spit is used.

SOME CONVENiences.

At this end of the room the cook moves, aberry table at his right hand, his copper tray at his back. This dresser has no back except the enamelled tiles of the wall. This, too, is a consideration in a city which lacks the necessary sum of cretinism, which is well known. Copper trays in scenes which show an unreasonable disposition to colonize in the seams of dressers, that they pry open for that purpose.

At the other end of the room the kitchen is small. At one end is the table at which the preparer of vegetables and opposite the porcelain lined sink and draining table where they are washed. This sink is provided with a grease trap, a clever device by which the grease is chilled and adheres until it can be easily removed or stoppage of pipes thereby prevented.

The clothes are dried to the bone in the servants' bedrooms are in front. Midway is the laundry with tiled floor and wainscoting; connecting with it is the servants' sitting room, and opening on to the kitchen.

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