



Women and the Home

Radio is the slender wire that brings the world and its affairs into the tiny kitchens and living rooms which hitherto had isolated so many housekeepers in the performance of their duties
—Margaret Bondfield

INTERVIEW

COME INTO THE KITCHEN!

WHEN you go along to interview a woman caterer, you expect to see her surrounded by her tools of trade; baking pans, patty tins, mixing bowls, and so on.

I was not disappointed. I found this little lady in her attractive green and white kitchen, spotless in a starched overall; her arms in a flurry of flour above a large mixing basin.

In a few seconds the flour was brushed away, the overall came off; revealing a pretty flowered frock that looked as dainty and fresh as its wearer.

She led the way into her sitting-room; a nice comfortable, homey-looking spot, with a piece of music opened on the piano, and a book and some knitting lying in a chair.

She took up her knitting.

Started in a Bakery

When I expressed surprise that she found time like this to relax, she laughed—

"You'd be surprised how much knitting I do get through—particularly since the War. I have been knitting for the soldiers. It takes a bit of managing, of course, but it gets done."

"About your job," I said, "it sounds an extremely interesting one."

"It is—much more than a casual outsider would imagine. It means hard work, of course, but I love it."

"Have you been cooking long—professionally, I mean?"

"Only a year since I started catering on my own account, but I have been cooking for the best part of my life. I started out in a bakery, and have been doing the same sort of work on and off, ever since."

Festive Atmosphere

"Then you don't find cooking a bore?"

"Far from it. Any job, after all, is what you make of it, and in the catering business you meet lots of charming people—besides being surrounded continuously by a festive atmosphere. Weddings, birthday parties, social functions—always seeing people at their brightest and happiest. It makes a difference, you know."

"I should think it would," I agreed. "It sounds to me a very congenial occupation. But how do you manage for staff?"

"Well, I do the smaller type of parties myself, but for the bigger functions, of course, I engage outside help. For example, this Saturday I have two weddings on, fortunately one is an hour after the other, so I will start the first one off, then dash away to the second."

All But the Eating

"How do you manage for crockery and linen for these functions?"

"I provide all my own. I'm most particular about having nice linen and china. I think it makes such a difference. I do the floral decorations, too: all the guests have to do is sit down and eat."

"You must have had a very busy time during the Conventions period."

She laughed.

"Well, every commission I undertake is a celebration of some sort, but that was certainly a busy time for me. I remember one afternoon tea-party I arranged for the Dentists' Convention. It was held in a lovely home well out of the city. I catered for seventy-five guests that day, and the tea was voted a great success."

All Kinds of Savouries

"What a relief for a hostess to have that responsibility taken off her hands. I suppose you put on all types of festive meals?"

"Oh, yes. Sit-down suppers of meat and game—buffet suppers—all types of catering. I cook cakes by the dozen and savouries by the tens of dozens. A thirty or forty dozen savoury order is quite usual."

"Goodness, my imagination would run out!"

She smiled.

"Oh, no, it wouldn't—not if you were used to it. There are so many different varieties; oyster, shrimp, and chicken patties, sausage and asparagus rolls, anchovy creams, cucumber boats—dozens of others. They just follow on automatically."

"They make me feel hungry just to hear about them," I said, "though I'd rather eat them than have the job of making them."

"I like it," she said.

Stop-Watch Not Necessary

"And how do you cook—with gas or electricity?"

"Electricity, though I've used all kinds. I remember making the loveliest cakes in the big old baking ovens."

"I suppose the secret lies in timing?"

"I never time anything," she said, "except wedding cakes and meringues—the rest I seem to know by instinct. It's just a matter of use—"

"And good cooking," I added. "I suppose you have a wonderful collection of recipes?"

"Hundreds," she answered, "some of them very old. But I always keep my eyes and ears open for new ones. I don't believe, though, in hoarding recipes like some secret treasure. To-day there are no trade secrets; the radio and modern cookery books have done away with that."

LAND OF PROMISE

Argentina is a land of promise to immigrants. At the Immigrant's Hotel at Buenos Aires, according to a newspaper report, food and lodging are provided free for five days—to sometimes as many as 4000 people at once.

Attached to this modern hotel is an up-to-date hospital and pharmacy, and a great sunny plaza in which the guests may rest. Settlers are allowed to bring in their goods free of duty and change their money without cost. Moving pictures are shown them of different States, and when they have made their choice of location, free transport is provided.

Two Recipes

"You've given me an idea," I said. "I don't want to rifle any of your pet recipes, but I wonder if you would let me have one or two to pass on to my readers. I know they would appreciate them."

"With pleasure," she answered.

Here they are. The first is for a biscuit.

SIMLA BISCUITS:

Cream together $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of butter and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of sugar. Add 1 beaten egg, 10oz. flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder sifted in, and $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of currants. Mix all together, roll out thin, cut into rounds, and bake for about 10 minutes in moderate oven.

The second is her favourite sandwich filling. She also serves it in little soufflé cases with salad, or heaps it on water biscuits.

MOCK CRAB:

Grate $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. cheese. Add 1 beaten egg, 2 tablespoons vinegar, 4 tablespoons milk, 1 teaspoon of made mustard, salt, and a flick of pepper. Put into small saucepan over low gas, and stir till mixture thickens. Allow to cool, then serve as desired.

Modern Saleswoman

There is a woman grocer in Wisconsin who does a flourishing, high-pressure business. She has an ingenious plan. In her shop she keeps an alarm clock set for an unknown hour—and with its face concealed from the customers. Whenever the bell rings, the customer who is being served at that moment receives his goods free of charge. Her shop door is invariably queued up.

Icy Request

A woman wrote to the Rural Electrification Administration of U.S.A. asking how to stop her refrigerator from making ice-cubes—"They freeze so fast," she said, "that I haven't room to store them!"

These Should Interest You:

Talks prepared by the A.C.E. Home Science Tutorial Section, the University of Otago:

"Odd Jobs for Handymen": Monday, April 22, 1YA 3.30 p.m.; 2YA 3 p.m.; 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"Foods of Our Forefathers": Wednesday, April 24, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Good Breakfasts for All": Friday, April 26, 1YA 3.30 p.m.; 2YA 3 p.m.; 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"Kitchen Time": Friday, April 26, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

FROM THE ZB STATIONS

"The House of Peter MacGregor": All ZB Stations, 10.30 a.m. Mondays to Fridays

"Filmland," by John Batten: 1ZB Auckland, 1 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays

"Songs at the Piano" (Reg. Morgan): 2ZB Wellington, 3.30 Tuesdays and Thursdays; 4.15 Wednesdays

"Jill Sings": 3ZB Christchurch, 6 p.m. Saturday, April 27

"Community Singing": 4ZB Dunedin, 12 noon, Tuesday, April 23

"Life on the Canadian Prairies—Winter": Mrs. Gladys Strum. Tuesday, April 23, 3YA 11 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: Flower Manners": Irene Hayes. Saturday, April 27, 1YA 11 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: Flowers and Happiness": Margaret E. Sangster. Saturday, April 27, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: A Singer Talks on Flowers": Rafaelo Diaz. Saturday, April 27, 4YA 10.50 a.m.

Splitting Hairs

Girls, do you know how many hairs you are supposed to have on your head? According to actual tests, a blonde averages 150,000 separate hairs on her head. A red-head may have as few as 25,000. Brunettes average between 80,000 and 130,000. It looks as though the blondes have IT!