LUXURY IN THE KITCHEN.

[Philadelphia Press.]

There may be room for exaggeration in the statement of Mr. Edward Atkinson as to the cost of healthful food for a man and how it may be prepared economically. But when he claims that a man can live on 10 cents a day, having good food, plenty of it and cooked in a more appetizing way than is the rule in ninety-nine out of one hundred households, and is willing to rest his reputation on the truth of his statements, it becomes worth while to look into his theories. Mr. Atkinson estimates that the food, fuel and liquor bill of the country is about $6,000,000,000 annually and that at least one quarter of this is wasted in bad buying and poor cooking. If the $1,500,000,000 lost every year were the only result it might be borne with equanimity, but more than this is the kitchen, the line of physical power through insufficient nutrition and the demand of the vast battalion of drunkards for stimulants. From these causes come poverty, intemperance and crime. The liquor saloon is looked upon as one of the greatest of crime schools. But if the evil effects of tasty dishes and badly cooked food could be traced and calculated it would be discovered that the kitchen is a greater breeder of criminals than the grog shop. The idea of any man who proposes to lessen the effects of this great source of crime and suffering deserve attention.

The standard of daily food for an American workingman is 450 grams of starchy material, 150 grams of fat and 150 grams of nitrogenous material. These are the quantities adopted in the German army from long experiments as necessary to a soldier doing active duty. Mr. Atkinson makes up the following dietary, containing the above elements in the right proportion. Twelve ounces of flour, four ounces of oatmeal or cornmeal, two ounces of lard and oleomargarine, one ounce of sugar, five ounces of potatoes, four ounces of onions, beets, turnips, etc., sixteen ounces of skim beef and two ounces of bacon or salt pork. This would make forty-six ounces of food and containing more than the requisite nutrition for a workingman. And Mr. Atkinson claims that it can be bought and cooked including the seasoning, for 5 or 6 cents a meal. The "Aladdin" oven, which Mr. Atkinson invented and gave to the public without reserving any patent rights, has heretofore been a part of his system of economical cooking. But he has discovered that a much simpler form of an oven will give nearly as good results. It consists of a kerosene lamp for heating purposes; a box or low table with a sheet iron top with a hole in it for the lamp chimney; some narrow strips of soapstone built around this hole and supporting a bread tin placed tightly over them to form the resting place for the food while cooking, and when the half of a clean barrel is turned over this the oven is complete. The idea is to confine the heat, a large percentage of which is lost in the ordinary way of cooking. A few improvements will suggest themselves to any mechanic, and then, if Mr. Atkinson is correct, steaks can be broiled, cakes baked, bread baked, and, in fact, every form of cooking done. There may be less in Mr. Atkinson's ideas than he claims and a big percentage of the results he obtained be caused by others. But of the need of an improvement in the American kitchen there is no doubt. And every one who has studied the subject will agree with Mr. Atkinson when he says, that in buying food and preparing it for the table there exists an "abuse that costs more than a protective tariff does, even if that cost be measured at the highest sum ever alleged by the most bigoted free trader; which costs more than the loss that would accrue from the adoption of absolute free trade, according to the measure of the most earnest protectionist; a waste greater than that caused by monetary disturbance; an abuse which is one of the main causes of intemperance and the principal cause of dyspepsia."

NATURAL GAS.

THE OHIO FIELD NOW PRACTICALLY EXHAUSTED.

[Indianapolis Journal.]

The once famous Ohio natural gas field is now practically exhausted, and many towns and cities of that region which enjoyed the luxury at a "boom" for a dozen years or more are now stagnated and almost hopeless. Only a short time ago the city of Findlay boasted the largest producing gas wells ever drilled, but today they are dry, jutless holes in the ground, with not enough pressure in the entire region to supply the demands of one month the domestic consumers. The glass manufactures have signed an agreement to move their plants from the town, and it is estimated that the exodus will take 4000 people from the place, most of them going into the Indiana field. It is a rather disagreeable truth to be compelled to admit. But it is nevertheless and unmistakable fact that there is a perceptible decrease in the head of the Hoosier gas belt and complaints are heard throughout the border districts. For example, when gas was first piped into Lafayette the home company's source of supply was the Kempton field, in Tipton county. That territory was long since exhausted, and it will no doubt be in the nature of a surprise to many Courier readers who witnessed the wonderful "gusher" in operation there three or four years ago to be informed that the village of Kempton is now supplied with gas from the Lafayette line drawn from a point twenty or thirty miles east of the original field terminal. The theory that gas is constantly accumulating in the reservoirs where it was first discovered has been effectually exploded. A given area contains just so many cubic feet of gas and no more. When that supply has been exhausted the wells are like so many soaked sponges—the shell remains but the substance is forever departed.

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Mr. Edward Prather

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FRANKLIN, VENANGO CO., PA., Feb. 18, 1893.

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