COOKING GAME.

Many people dislike the strong game flavor of our western birds and large game animals, particularly the old roosters and male elk, deer or bear. In such cases the method used by the pioneers when cooking sage ~~chickens~~ hens on the western plains can still be employed. We used to cook and enjoy eating the old sage ~~chickens~~ hens after they had feasted all winter on the sage leaves, and their flesh was stronger with a flavor of that plant than a Thanksgiving turkey dressing. After cleaning the bird we soaked it over night in a strong solution of soda and water, and the strong flavor was gone.

CLARIFYING MUDDY WATER.

It has often been said that necessity is the mother of invention. This was particularly true in pioneer days when the frontiersmen had to put up with all kinds of discomforts not met with in modern homes. Clean and wholesome drinking water was very hard to find on the plains, and after cloud-bursts and rains the streams were changed into a molasses-like mixture of mud and water. I remember as a boy when living on the North Platte River in Wyoming in the latter part of the nineteenth century we overcame this obstacle by a method used by the Indians. The hills were covered with masses of pan-cake-shaped ~~cacti~~ prickly pear plant. This ~~cactus~~ was about an inch thick, and covered with thorns. We split each ~~cactus~~ leaf into two layers with its glutinous interior exposed, and impaled them on a clean stick. By rotating them slowly in a bucket of muddy water for a few minutes the mud ~~material~~ would adhere to the sticky ~~cacti~~ succulent leaf and leave a pail-full of clear, wholesome water. Whether this system is still followed in the places where the ~~cactus~~ prickly pear is plentiful and no wells are available I cannot say.

COOKING FISH.

A public celebration was held about forty years ago at Saratoga, Wyoming, to advertise the fishing facilities of the North Platte River. Everybody went fishing, and game wardens confiscated the catches for the public good on very flimsy evidence of law violation. Picnic lunch was served in the open with fried trout as the main dish. The fish were stored in ice-boxes, and the visitors selected their own fish, and took them to a large cauldron of boiling fat. The cook immersed them like a woman would cook donuts to suit the taste of each individual, and they were delicious. By this method a fish, large or small,can be cooked thoroughly all through without burning the outside to a crisp and leaving nearly raw flesh on the interior.

While with a construction gang on the Payette River in Idaho a few years ago, I spent my leasure hours fishing. One day I caught a very large sucker, which most of us westerners don't consider worth cooking on account of the many small, needle-like bones. The cook, however, insisted on cooking it. With a sharp knife he slit the skin of the fish in parallel lines above the rib bones, split the back-bone and cooked it flattened to the pan. The meat tasted good, and the tiny bones had disappeared. The heat penetrating through the broken skin had disolved the troublesome bones.

An enthusiastic fisherman loves to show the beautiful colors on his rainbow trout or bright-colored sea fish. But when cooked its beauty is changed to a brown and brittle paper-like covering. The color of such a fish can be preserved when cooked by wrapping it in a double thickness of cheese cloth which is frequently dampened while baking, and can thus be served in all its natural splendor.

America
Eats.

Bartlett.

PRUNES ON THE DESERT.

Dried prunes have been designated as the great American dessert, probably by their frequent appearance on the menu of boarding houses. But the humble prune is a valuable addition to the ~~food supply~~ diet of miners, hunters and explorers who are far from food supplies. While on a geological expedition to the hot plains of southwestern Idaho in the summer we used this great American dessert on the Great American Desert, and we let the sun do the cooking. By placing the dried prunes in a Mason Jar half filled with water and laying it in the hot sand during the day, they were well cooked by night. Evidently the curved surface of the glass jar focused the sun's rays on the prunes with increased heat.

POTATOES BAKED IN MUD.

Hunters and campers who are not provided with a Dutch oven, can bake their potatoes "pioneer fashion". The potatoes are covered with a layer of damp, soft clay or mud, placed in a shallow hole in the ground and covered with an inch of soil. A fire is built on top of them and kept burning for about half an hour and the hot coals left until they cool. Another fire can be made for cooking coffee and bacon. When removed from the mud they are well baked.