



The Health Reformer's Cook Book (American Antiquarian Cookbook Collection)

Lucretia Jackson

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Once life and culture had stabilized in the 19th century and moved beyond the frontier focus on subsistence and survival, Americans began to explore the idea of improving health and creating more comfortable lifestyles. Health reform in the late 19th century emerged from the idea that a healthy body and practicing moderation in daily living were necessary to a spiritual, meaningful existence. From these ideas, the vegetarian philosophy was codified, and *The Health Reformer's Cook Book* embraced trends that still have significance today.

As stated in the book, it's "object is to restore the sick to health by means of . . . pure air, pure water, sunlight, sleep, proper clothing, judicious exercise, healthful food, pleasant social influences, &c., excluding all poisonous drugs." *The Health Reformer's Cook Book* is based on the methods and beliefs that Jackson and her husband actually employed at a health facility founded by her husband. Following the health reform ideals of the time, Jackson included recipes to limit excessive eating and following a vegetarian diet focused on simple meals of fruits, vegetables, and grains—all trends that still resonant with health experts today.

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