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THE GIRL'S OWN COOKERY BOOK

PHILLIS BROWNE

THE GIRL'S OWN

COOKERY BOOK.

BY

PHILLIS BROWNE.

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PREFATORY NOTE

BY

SIR J. RISDON BENNETT, M.D., F.R.S.

THE following pages are intended to instruct the middle classes of our community in the art of Cookery, not merely for the purpose of contributing to their own health, comfort, and enjoyment, but also to enable them to render much needed help to others, especially the poor, both in sickness and health.

Neither the moral, physical, nor economic bearings of wholesome, properly-cooked food are sufficiently understood or appreciated by our countrymen and women. In scarcely any other country does so much prejudice and ignorance prevail on the subject of food and its employment. In no more ready and efficient way can the rudiments of science be imparted than in connection with Cookery; and the efforts that are now being made to give instruction in Cookery in combination with Board and other elementary Schools, are a subject for sincere rejoicing with those who desire both the moral and physical welfare of the poorer classes.

No subject is more deserving of the attention of the zealous advocates of the cause of temperance. It is truer charity to instruct a poor woman how to make a good wholesome stew with a little oatmeal and a few odds and ends of meat and vegetables, than to give her once a week a basin of good soup ; or to teach her how to avoid absolute waste of such food as she has, than to give her a shilling or two to buy a bit of mutton. A contented Christian character and a clean hearth will do much to make home happy, and a knowledge of economic wholesome cookery will also do much to keep the men from resorts of dissipation and intemperance, and the children healthy and cheerful.

But let no one imagine that it will be an easy thing to overcome the prejudice and dispel the ignorance existing amongst us respecting food and its use, a subject which has so wide and important a relation to the social welfare of the people. Let us, however, hope that this little work may do something towards making "Our Girls" both better housekeepers and more useful as Angels of Mercy, exemplifying the character as well as imparting the good news of "Him who came to seek and to save the lost."

J. R. B.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

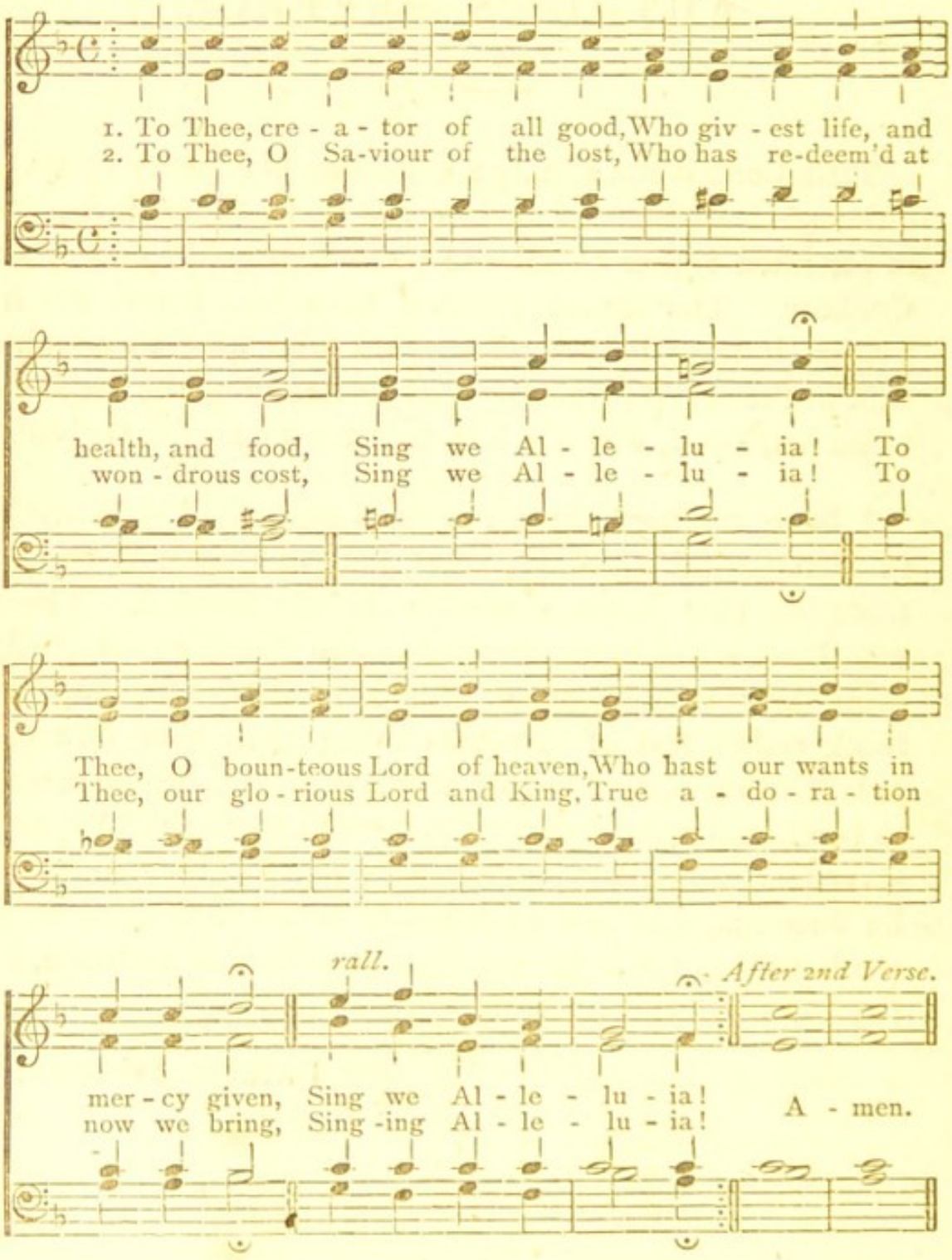
THIS book is not simply a collection of cookery recipes, although a number of recipes are to be found in it. It is intended rather to fill the place of a guide or key to Cookery. The object which I have had before me in writing it is to inform those girls who wish to acquire skill in the art of preparing food, concerning the methods to be employed, with the why and the wherefore thereof.

I have confined my attention strictly and exclusively to Economical Cookery, for I believe that it is in this direction that improvement is chiefly needed. Those who have accustomed themselves to "fare sumptuously every day" would perhaps find it to their advantage to think rather less of luxurious living than they now do. It is the every-day food of ordinary people which needs to be chosen more judiciously, cooked more skilfully, and served more invitingly than it now is. If this end could be accomplished the community would doubtless reap the benefit in the improved health, and also, perhaps, in the morale of its members.

PHILLIS BROWNE.

Grace before or after Meat.

Words by CECILIA HAVERGAL. *Music by* C. H. PURDAY.



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INTRODUCTORY.

COOKERY is one of the Arts. Those who would excel in it must, like other artists, be educated for it. It would be as reasonable to expect that a girl could play one of Beethoven's sonatas, because she had the score, a piano, and a music stool, as it would be to suppose that she could prepare a dinner because she was in possession of a cooking apron, a rolling-pin, a pastry board, and the materials for making an apple pie.

A knowledge of cookery consists in the understanding of a number of details connected with the subject. *To be a cook* is to be able to act upon that knowledge. This power can only be gained by practice and experience. No one can learn to be a cook by reading papers on cookery, any more than they can satisfy their hunger by looking at a sirloin of beef.

It will be my endeavour in these pages to write down the details of cookery as plainly as I can. The girls who read them must, if they would become cooks, go down into the kitchen and prove for themselves whether or not what I say is right. They will feel at first a little awkward; things will not come exactly as they want them. But if they will persevere they will soon become skilful, and after a time they will be able to congratulate themselves on being able to cook. This means that as long as they live they, and more than themselves—those whom they love—will never be dependent upon others for the comforts of home; that whatever position in life they may occupy,

they will be able to cook food themselves, or to direct others in doing it; and that they will have gone a long way in the road which leads to their being good daughters, good wives, good mothers, and good mistresses. In addition, they will gain one of the finest things a woman can gain—the power to use their own hands for a useful purpose.

There are six different ways of cooking food: roasting, broiling, boiling, baking, stewing, and frying. Of these, roasting and broiling may be described as the most nutritious; stewing and boiling as the most economical and digestible; frying and baking as the most convenient and speedy. I will begin with roasting.

I. ROASTING.

WE English are continually being told how very much better the French cook their food; but at any rate we may pride ourselves on this, they do not roast meat so well as we. A great French cook once said that in England all women roast well, and certainly the roast beef of old England is celebrated all over the world. Those who have travelled on the Continent know that wherever the English go it is thought necessary to provide them with "rosbif;" and as a rule I imagine experienced travellers avoid the dish, and regard it as a delusion and a snare. Our real roast beef is quite a different thing. Let us see what makes it so excellent.

The first consideration is the joint itself. The superior pieces of meat are generally chosen for roasting. The coarser parts are reserved for stewing. Red meats—that is, beef, and mutton, and game—should be hung for a while before they are roasted, for only when this is done can it be expected that they will be tender. White meats, on the contrary—such as lamb, veal, and pork—taint quickly, and require to be roasted when fresh.

The time that meat should be kept must depend upon the weather and the time of the year. In cold dry weather

a leg of mutton can be hung for three weeks with advantage. In hot, and particularly in what is called "muggy" weather, it will not keep for as many days. In buying meat, therefore, the state of the weather should first be considered. If it is favourable, inquiry should be made when the joint is bought, as to the time which has elapsed since the animal was killed. If it is freshly killed, do not be persuaded to roast it at once. Hang it—not lay it in a dish—in a cool, airy larder, and examine it every day. Do this with particular care if the weather should change. If it should get to look at all moist in any part, cook it at once. Good beef, however, does not become moist with keeping. A good many cooks will flour a leg or a shoulder of mutton all over to prevent its becoming moist, and this is a very good plan.

One thing I must not forget to say, and that is that a joint must not be allowed to freeze; if it does it will be sure to be spoilt. When there is a frost, it is advisable to put meat that is to be roasted in the warm kitchen for awhile, in order to soften it, before putting it down to the fire. Houses are built in such a way now that it is not every one who has a "cool, airy larder" in which they can keep meat. When this is the case, there is nothing for it but to trust to the butcher. If you ask him to supply you with well-hung beef or mutton, he will doubtless do so, or will hang the meat for you.

If meat is to be roasted before an open range, the fire must be looked after fully an hour before the meat is put down. It would be of no use to hang meat before a fire that has just been made up. It would only get a smoky, unpleasant taste, and the juice would be drawn out of it, instead of being kept in the meat as it ought to be. A good cook is very particular about her fire. She first pokes it well underneath, to clear it thoroughly from the dust and small cinders which will have settled at the bottom, pushing the live coals to the front of the range. She then puts fresh coal on the fire, choosing for her purpose not large blocks of coal, but what are called "nubbly" pieces. She does not throw these on from the scuttle, but arranges them with her fingers, protected by an old glove, so that they shall be packed closely, yet leaving room for a draught of air to pass be-

tween the lumps. She then sweeps up the hearth, collects the cinders, and places them with some coke or damped coal-dust at the back of the fire. A fire made like this will last a long time. As soon as the front part is clear and bright, it is ready for the meat. It must not be forgotten, however, that it must be watched, and fresh pieces of coal or coke added occasionally, in order that it may be kept up until the meat is roasted.

The dripping-tin, with a good-sized lump of dripping in it, should be put down ten minutes or so before the meat. This is to be done so that there may be dripping at hand to baste the meat with as soon as it is put down. The goodness of roasted meat depends very much upon its being frequently basted, and this is particularly necessary when the joint is very close to the fire, as it is at the beginning. If a meat-screen is used, it also should be put before the fire, so that it may not be cold when the meat is put into it.

While the dripping is melting, the meat may be got ready. It should be looked over and trimmed neatly if required, any rough or jagged pieces, or superfluous fat or suet being cut away with a sharp knife. A leg of mutton should have the knuckle bone cut off, and the skin from the thickest part of the leg, where it joined the loin, cut away. These trimmings must of course be preserved. They can be stewed, and will make very good stock. A sirloin of beef should have the soft pipe that runs down the middle of the bone taken away. This has a very unpleasant appearance if left on the joint. All white meats are better for being wrapped in greased paper before they are put to the fire.

Some cooks think it necessary to wash meat before putting it down. If the joint has been bought of a respectable dealer, and has not been roughly handled, it is most undesirable that this should be done, as nothing draws the goodness out of meat more than washing it. If there is any suspicion that it has been touched by dirty fingers, it may be scraped and wiped with a damp cloth, or if it is in such a condition that it *must* be washed, it must be plunged in and out of hot water. The business must be performed as quickly as possible, and the meat must be dried at once and thoroughly with a soft cloth. If it

should happen that the meat has been kept a little too long, or if it is discoloured in any part, it should be washed quickly with vinegar and water, and wiped dry afterwards.

The next thing is to wind up the meat-jack, to weigh the joint, and then to hang it on the meat-hook. And here it must be remembered that the meat is to hang by the small end, so that the largest or thickest part should hang a little below the hottest part of the fire. The thickest part of the meat will take more roasting than the rest, therefore the fiercest heat of the fire must fall upon it.

It is a great object both in roasting and boiling meat to keep in the gravy or juice. In both cases this is best effected by cooking the outside very quickly, so that it shall be a sort of case through which the juices of the meat cannot escape. It is for this purpose that the meat should be put quite near the fire to begin with—that is, as near as it can be not to burn the outside; and it should be basted immediately to prevent its becoming hard and dry. Then in about five or six minutes it may be drawn back to the distance of about a foot from the fire, and basted frequently till it is done. By frequently I mean as much and as often as possible, for meat can scarcely be basted too much. It is the lean part of meat that requires basting. The screen that is put round it will keep the cold air from blowing upon it.

This is a very important part of roasting, and I should like to impress it upon you. I once heard a very clever cook say that in every dish she made there was a secret; and her great desire was to keep the secret very safe, so that no one might make such good things as she did. We will act quite differently. We will try to discover the secrets, and if they are worth knowing we will tell them all round.

As to the time the meat will take to roast, that will vary with its quality, its thickness, and the heat of the fire. This is one of the points on which a cook cannot go by a book, but must use her common sense. The great general rules are a quarter of an hour to the pound, and a quarter of an hour over for red meats; and twenty minutes to the pound, and twenty minutes over for white

meats,—lamb, veal, and pork. These rules, however, cannot always be followed. A thick, solid piece of meat, such as rolled ribs of beef, or the top side of the round of beef, or a loin of mutton boned and rolled, would need to be roasted longer per pound than a shoulder of mutton or a loin of mutton that was not rolled ; while a joint that had a good deal of gristle and bone in it, such as the thin flank of beef, would need to roast half-an-hour to the pound. Then the time of the year has something to do with it. Meat requires longer roasting in winter than it does in summer time. This is one of the lessons that only experience can teach.

There is one very important point that I must not forget to mention, and that is—*take care of the dripping*. This is a most valuable article. It can be used for a great many purposes, which we will speak of later; therefore we must look after it now. It may be that we have a dripping-tin made with a well to receive the fat, and if this is the case it will be kept free from dust and cinders without any difficulty. But a very great many people have merely a shallow tin or wrought-iron pan to put under the meat. When this is the case, the fat must be looked after. If any cinders fall in they must be removed ; and the fat must be poured away once or twice whilst the joint is roasting, to prevent its getting burnt. Of course, enough dripping must still be left in the pan to baste the meat. If dust should fall from the fire to soil the side of the tin, the opposite side should be at once turned to the fire.

And now we have kept up our fire and basted our meat vigorously, and the time is drawing near when it should be sufficiently roasted. I am quite sure that a pleasant odour is making itself felt which is enough to make our mouths water. The dishes and plates are on the plate warmer, and everything seems ready.

II.

GRAVY FOR JOINTS.

It can generally be told, from the look of the gravy that is served with a joint, whether or not the cook understands her business. If the gravy is fatty, or cold, or looks like thin light-coloured gruel, also if there is a great deal of it in the dish, I would advise you to resign yourself to your fate, and remember that man eats to live, he does not live to eat. If on the contrary the gravy is clear, bright, brown, free from fat and small in quantity, cheerfully leave yourself in the hands of the carver, for it is probable that you are about to partake of a well-cooked dinner.

Gravy may either be made a little time before it is wanted, or it may be prepared from the brown sediment which is to be found in the dripping-tin under the joint. The latter method I do not recommend, but it is the more usual of the two, and therefore I will describe it first.

It is well known that after meat has been hung before the fire for a while, fat begins to drop from it. In course of time this fat will be mixed with a sort of rich brown juice, and it is from this latter substance that the gravy is to be made.

Now a great point in making gravy is to have it free from fat.

Everyone knows what fatty gravy is like. So long as the meat and dish are hot, it is not very objectionable; but as the joint and plates cool, the fat solidifies, and floats in cakes on the top of the gravy, and the taste of one of these is more easily imagined than described.

The reason why it is undesirable to make gravy from the contents of the dripping-tin is, that it is so difficult to get rid of the fat in the tin, and to retain the sediment only.

When, however, gravy has to be thus made, the fat must be poured off from one corner of the tin; this must be done carefully and with a steady hand. When the sedi-

ment only remains, the cook should pour in about a third of a pint of boiling stock, or boiling water, if stock is not to be had. She should then scrape the tin well in order to dissolve any hard dry spots of gravy that there may be, and when these are melted she should pour a spoonful or two of the gravy *round*, but not *over* the meat in the dish, and the rest into a hot tureen.

If the gravy has become cool whilst in the tin, it should be made hot in a saucepan before being strained into the dish, but it should not be allowed to boil.

No greater mistake can be made than to pour a large quantity of gravy into the dish with the meat. In the first place it is very awkward for the carver; for a mere slip of his knife may cause him to splash the gravy over the cloth. In the second place, unless a hot-water dish is used, the gravy will cool much more quickly in a large dish than it will in a small covered tureen. And more than all, made gravy will dilute the gravy that runs from the meat. When a joint is properly roasted, a gush of gravy follows the first cut of the knife, and then continues to flow from the meat while it is being carved. The majority of grown-up people would rather have a teaspoonful of this real juice of meat, than a quarter of a pint of the coloured water which is so often served as gravy. When the family is large, and gravy is much liked, a little made gravy must be used, because the joint, in all probability, would not yield as much as is wanted; but it is a pity when that which it does yield is not made the most of.

If gravy is provided apart from the joint, the entire contents of the dripping-tin can be poured into a basin. In a few hours, when the fat is cold, it will be found that the gravy has settled to the bottom and lies, a clear brown cake of jelly, which can be used without any of the fat the next time gravy is wanted.

When I recommend that gravy should be prepared apart from the joint, I hope no one will think I am going to advise the purchase of gravy beef. Indeed I am not, for I should consider such a purchase extravagant and unnecessary.

In all houses where meat is cooked there are little bones, trimmings, and scraps, from which excellent gravy can be prepared, costing nothing but a little care and

forethought; and without these, economical cookery is impossible.

Suppose that gravy is wanted to-day for a joint of beef. *Something* was cooked for dinner yesterday, and it is almost certain that a bone or scraps of some kind were left from it. If the cook had forethought she would have put these on one side, cover them over to keep them clean, and when there was a convenient opportunity, that is, when the fire was not in use, she would stew them for gravy. Perhaps bacon was served for breakfast, or boiled meat had been provided, in either case she would be particularly fortunate; of course she would have preserved the meat liquor, pouring it into a clean earthenware pan, and throwing a little muslin over it to keep it from dust and flies. What course would she now pursue to make gravy?

She would first take a small onion, skin it and cut it into rings. She would melt a little dripping in a saucepan, throw in the onion and shake it over the fire until it was brown, but not at all burnt. She would now put in the bones and scraps, together with a sprig of parsley, an inch or two of celery, three or four peppercorns, and the rind of the bacon which had been scalded in boiling water and scraped with a blunt knife to make it quite clean. Over all she would pour meat liquor or cold water to barely cover her materials; then, covering the saucepan closely and placing it by the side of the fire, she would let its contents stew very gently indeed, skimming it every now and then with an iron spoon for a couple of hours till the liquor was considerably reduced, and was strong and pleasantly flavoured. Then she might strain it off and put it on one side to let any fat there might be rise to the surface, when it could be easily removed. If the liquid were light-coloured, a few drops of sugar browning should be stirred in, but it is probable that the browned onion will have supplied all that is required in the way of colouring; and sugar browning should be very sparingly used. Only let the gravy be a rich, deep brown. In cookery the appearance of a dish is almost as important as its taste, and light-coloured gravy for joints is not pleasing to the eye.

If two tablespoonfuls of the gravy thus made were put

into the dish with the meat, the gravy that runs from the meat would mix with it, and would furnish an excellent accompaniment to the roasted joint.

If it should happen that there was no opportunity to stew the scraps and trimmings in time for the fat to cake on the top of the gravy, it would be well to pour the liquid into a jar, and set this in a vessel containing cold water. This would make it cool more rapidly, and so cause the fat to rise more quickly to the surface.

Care must be taken, however, not to put too much water over the bone. Good gravy is wanted, and this would be more likely to be obtained if water or stock were taken to partly cover the bone, and no more.

Gravy thus made would do very well for beef or pork, but not for mutton or lamb. These meats would be served with good brown *unflavoured* gravy. Therefore the flavouring ingredients should not be stewed with the bone for them ; but the bone should be stewed in nothing but stock or water slightly salted. Good gravy for a leg or shoulder of mutton may be made by stewing the shank bone and one or two trimmings of meat for an hour or two.

Perhaps it will be thought that it is a very simple business to make gravy, and that it is unnecessary to attend to all these details in connection with it. But it is not so. Very often gravy is a delusion. I have known cooks who professed to understand their business take a little boiling water and pour it over the browner portions of the joint, thus watering the joint to all intents and purposes, and then consider that they have done all that is required for gravy. They were mistaken, and they were only proving their ignorance. There is nothing that shows the ability of a cook more than gravies and sauces. It is very safe to conclude that where meat is served regularly with good brown bright gravy, perfectly free from fat, some one in the house knows something of cookery.

III.

BOILING.

BEFORE boiling meat of any kind whatever, we should always ask ourselves one question, and that is, "Do I want to keep the goodness in this meat, or do I want to get the goodness out of it?" It is on the answer we give, that our course must depend.

If the meat is to be eaten, we want to keep the goodness in it. We shall not be able to manage this entirely, for, with all our care, some of it will escape into the water, but we may preserve a great deal of it. And the best means we can adopt for this purpose is to surround the meat as quickly as possible with a kind of shield, through which the juices cannot escape.

We all know that an egg when broken in a cup is liquid. If this same egg be turned into a saucepan containing boiling water it will in three minutes be quite different, for the white part will be solid. Now, there is in meat a great deal of the same substance that white of egg is composed of—that is, albumen, the peculiar property of which is that heat makes it solid. When, therefore, we plunge meat into boiling water, the albumen in it becomes solid, just as the white of an egg does. Of course the part that is nearest to the hot water, that is, the outside, gets hard first, and this makes our shield. After the meat has boiled for five minutes, or a little less, it is quite surrounded with a covering that will keep in the goodness that we so much want to preserve.

If any one doubts the truth of this, let her take a little piece of raw beef, divide it into halves, and put one half into cold water and the other into boiling water. In one minute the cold water will be tinged with red—the goodness will have begun to escape from the meat. The boiling water will be very nearly the colour it was before. If the beef is allowed to lie in the cold water for about half an hour, the water will be quite red and the meat will be white; its juice will have passed into the water,

and it will be valueless for nourishing purposes. It is on this account that, when we want to make beef-tea, we put the beef to soak for a while in cold water to draw out the goodness, before we put it into a jar to be placed in a saucepan of water to simmer till it is done.

We must not suppose, however, that when we have got our shield round the meat, we are to let it keep on boiling till it is sufficiently cooked. If we did this the meat would be shield all the way through, and that would make unnecessarily hard work both for our teeth and our digestions. What we want is, not only to keep in the goodness, but to make the meat tender. This can be done only by gentle stewing. We must therefore proceed in this way. First, we plunge our meat into the fast boiling water: it instantly stops boiling, for the cold meat cools the liquid, so we bring it to the boiling point again as quickly as we can, let it boil for five minutes, then draw it back to a cooler place, put a wine-glassful of cold water into it to lower the temperature, and keep it simmering gently till it is done.

If we had a thermometer at hand to put into the water, we should find that when it was boiling, the quicksilver rose to 212 degrees. When the saucepan was drawn back and the cold water put in, the quicksilver would fall to 180 degrees, and it is at this point it should be kept all the time.

I know of nothing more difficult than to persuade inexperienced cooks of the fact that meat is made tender by gentle simmering, and hard by quick boiling.

Somehow it seems as if, when the water in the saucepan is galloping away, progress is being made, and the meat will be done sometime; whilst, when it simmers only, things seem almost at a standstill. I have again and again explained this to pupils, as I thought, in the clearest manner, and then, if I turned away for a little time, I should be sure to find the water boiling hard on my return. At last I have come to look upon those who can calmly allow meat to simmer, instead of boil, with a great deal of respect, as being far on the way to make good cooks.

The rule applies to all fresh meat,—beef, mutton, pork, poultry, and fish. When once we understand the general

rule, we do not need to look in a cookery book to see how different joints are cooked. The rule is for all: a neck of mutton, a leg of mutton, a chicken, or a salmon, we must treat them all alike—first surround the meat with a coat of mail to keep in the goodness, and then simmer it gently till done.

I know very well that it is very uncommon to observe this rule, so far as fish is concerned. But I know of no reason why this should be. It is true, fish does not contain so much albumen as meat; but it contains a little, and this, when hardened, will help to keep in the goodness. The only exception should be with mackerel, which may be put into warm water, because the skin is so delicate that boiling water would cause it to break.

One would think, to hear people talk, that boiling was one of the commonest processes in cookery. The fact is, that when cookery is understood, real boiling is very uncommon, excepting for a few minutes at a time. If we used words that really expressed what we mean, we should say "simmered" rabbit and "simmered" beef, instead of "boiled" rabbit and "boiled" beef. Boiling, as applied to meats, is useful chiefly for hardening the outside to keep in the goodness, and for reducing liquid to make sauces.

As soon as the water boils, after the meat is put in, it should be well skimmed. The impurities that are in the meat are dissolved by the hot water, and they rise to the surface in the form of scum. If this is not taken off at once, it will sink again and make the meat a bad colour, so it will be well to watch for the scum, and take it off as quickly as it appears; a little salt thrown into the liquid will help it to rise. The earliest scum should be thrown away; but in a little while the fat of the meat will melt and rise, and this should be taken off and carefully preserved, for there is no fat that we can get that is so useful for frying as the skimmings of saucepans. Of that I shall have to speak when we are talking of frying meat.

The time that meat should simmer must, as in roasting, vary with the thickness of the joint. The safe general rule for beef and mutton is a quarter of an hour to the pound, and a quarter of an hour over. When meat is

very thick and solid, half an hour over may be allowed. When meat is to be pressed under a weight, and eaten cold, half an hour a pound will not be too long for it to simmer. Pork and salt meat should have twenty minutes per pound, and fish ten minutes per pound, and ten minutes over if it is thick. The time should always be counted from the moment the meat is drawn back, after it has been surrounded by its shield. This, therefore, must be considered, and allowance made for the time the water will take to boil again after the meat has cooled it.

This general rule of putting meat into boiling water holds good for fresh meat only. A difference must be made with salted meat. Salt gets into the pores of the meat and needs to be drawn out a little before the shield surrounds the joint, or the meat would be hard. Therefore salted meat should be put into lukewarm instead of boiling water, or, if it has been very strongly salted, it may even be put into cold water. The liquid may then be brought to the boiling point, be skimmed, and be left to boil for five minutes, and boiled twenty minutes per pound, and twenty minutes over.

I must not forget to mention one thing. When I was speaking of roasting meat I said that beef and mutton should hang as long as possible before being put down to the fire. It is not so with meat that is to be boiled. If meat on the point of turning were boiled it would neither taste well nor look well, and, more than that, the liquor in which it was cooked would be good for nothing.

I hope no one would ever think of throwing away the liquor in which fresh meat had been boiled. As I said a little while ago, do what we will, some of the goodness of the meat will have gone into it, and this must not be wasted. We English have the character of being the most wasteful cooks in the world, and the greatest benefit that would follow the spread of the knowledge of cookery would be that there would not be so much waste. The meat liquor must be poured at once into a clean earthenware pan, and kept in a cool place till wanted. Excellent soup may afterwards be made of it, or it may be used instead of water for gravy and sauces. The only precaution that is necessary in order to keep it good is to boil it every

day in warm weather, and every three or four days in cold weather. The worst of salt meat is that the liquor can seldom be used again in this way, and especially when saltpetre has been plentifully used to redden salt meat. The best thing that we can do after salt meat has been boiled is to taste the liquor, and if it is very salt, to throw it away at once. If saltpetre has been sparingly used, the liquor may serve for pea or lentil soup, but for no other kind.

So much for boiling meat. And now for vegetables. The majority of these should be thrown into plenty of fast-boiling salted water, and boiled with the lid *off* the pan. If this can be done, and the vegetables are of moderate age, they will be sure to be a good colour. Sometimes, when they have to be cooked on an open range, the fire is smoky, and therefore the lid must be put on. They will not then be of such a good colour. Closed ranges are, however, becoming every day more usual amongst us, and with them there need be no difficulty in preserving the colour of vegetables. An exception to the general rule of putting vegetables into boiling water is made in the case of old potatoes, which should be put into cold water and gently stewed. New potatoes may, however, be put into boiling water like the rest.

IV.

BAKING.

In many parts of England baking is spoken of as if it referred to bread alone. I do not want us to consider it in that way, but rather as a means of cooking food of different kinds, such as meat, pastry, and puddings, as well as bread. Baking is really but another form of roasting, the difference between the two being that in roasting the meat turns before the fire in the open, so that a current of air can play upon it, and in baking the meat lies motionless in a confined space.

There is no doubt that meat roasted before a fire is

very much superior to meat baked in the oven. Those who have been long accustomed to the first cannot enjoy the second. They can detect it at once, both by its taste and its smell, and consider it both unpalatable and unwholesome.

The old-fashioned open ranges are certainly very objectionable for a great many reasons. They consume a great deal of fuel, and they are exceedingly dirty, all saucepans that are put upon the fires becoming so sooty that it is scarcely possible for those who have to use them to help being grimy also; and with them food becomes smoky very quickly; but there is no question that with them meat can be roasted to perfection.

We have, however, to do with things as they are, and these open ranges are rapidly becoming things of the past. We may quite expect that in the course of a few years they will be done away with altogether, and on the whole it will be a very good thing. The principal reason why I shall be glad to see close ranges universally used, is, that I believe ladies will practise cookery more when they are common, than it can possibly be expected they will when they cannot cook a mutton chop without blacking themselves and their dress. With closed ranges they can put on an apron and a pair of sleeves, and with their own hands prepare little delicacies for their husbands and fathers; remove the apron, and, without further trouble, take their places at the head of the table, looking as fresh as a summer flower.

And, in addition, they can practise cookery and still keep their hands white and soft. This may, to strong-minded people, seem an unimportant detail, and I do not quite know that I ought to speak of it here, but I may as well confess that I admire soft, white hands, and I think every girl is justified in taking pains to keep hers so. If she could not do this whilst doing useful work, I would certainly say, let your hands go; but this is not always the alternative.

And now for the best way of roasting meat in the oven or, to speak correctly, baking it. In the more modern closed ranges a special provision is made for ventilating the oven, in order that fresh air may enter and the vapours given off by the meat may be carried away, and so the

saturated taste peculiar to baked meat be removed. Meat thus baked in a ventilated oven is generally called roast meat ; and it is very nearly, though I cannot say I think it is quite, as good as that which is roasted before the fire.

The same general rules as to hanging meat and basting it will hold good in baking as in roasting. When first the meat is put in, the ventilator should be closed, and the joint should be placed for about five minutes in the hottest part of the oven, in order that the outside may become quickly browned, and so the goodness of the meat may be kept in. After this the ventilator should be opened, and the meat be gently baked till done. The opening of the ventilator will slightly cool the oven. In order to keep both meat and dripping from burning, a hot-water tin should be used. If this is not to be had, two dripping tins, one smaller than the other, may be employed instead. The meat should be placed in the smaller tin ; and this should stand in the larger one, which should be kept filled up with boiling water.

Meat should be placed on a stand in the dripping-tin, in order to raise it and prevent its soaking in its own dripping, thus becoming saturated and disagreeable. Small stands made for the purpose are to be bought for a few pence.

When placing the joint on this stand it is well to put the fat side uppermost in the first instance, in order that the fat may melt and drop down upon the leaner part. If there should be but little fat upon the joint, a piece of kitchen paper that has been thickly spread with dripping should be placed over it to keep it from burning too quickly—of course, printed paper will not do for this. In any case the meat should be turned over two or three times, or it will not be equally cooked.

As to the time that a joint should be baked. When the ventilator is made use of, the same rules may be followed as in roasting before the fire. If there is no ventilator in the oven, ten minutes to the pound and ten minutes over will be quite sufficient. As in ordinary roasting, solid meat needs to be cooked longer than thin meat, and white meat longer than red meat. It must be remembered also that cakes and pastry should not be put into the oven when meat is being baked, as the steam that rises from it will be likely to make them heavy.

A very important point in baking is the temperature of the oven. No rules as to the time of cooking can be of the slightest use unless the oven is of the right heat. The very safest way of testing it is to have a thermometer set into the front of the oven, and regulate the heat by this. Bakers in Paris and Vienna, who make most delicious bread, never bake it by guess, but are guided by a thermometer. If we have one of these useful articles in our oven door, we only need be careful that the quicksilver shall rise to 300 deg. for baking small articles of puff pastry, to 280 deg. for larger pieces of pastry, such as pies, tarts, &c., and to 240 deg. for cakes and meat. Bread will require 410 deg. of heat to begin with, as with modern iron ovens quick baking is best.

Not many ovens, however, are provided with thermometers, and therefore we must have some other way of finding out the heat. Ovens are particular concerns. They need to be looked after and managed and understood, and if they are neglected they are sure to revenge the insult. There are so many varieties amongst modern stoves, that the particular kind each has to do with must be studied, or the most carefully mixed cake or the lightest pastry will be "spoilt in the baking." An experienced cook could tell by putting her hand into the oven whether it was of the right temperature; but until we can gain this experience we must adopt some simple test.

Perhaps the easiest way of testing the heat of the oven is to sprinkle a little flour in it. If this should turn black in one minute the oven is too hot. If it should be of a bright brown colour the oven is hot enough for baking. If it should remain uncoloured, the oven is slack.

An oven that is too hot is, however, to be preferred to one that is "slack." It is always easy to put an additional baking sheet underneath, or a strip of paper over what is to be baked; but an oven that is too slow never bakes well. It will make bread and cakes heavy, pastry hard, and meat dry and flavourless.

There is generally one part of the oven that is hotter than the other. I have already said that meat should go into this first, in order to brown the surface quickly; and so also should cakes and pastry, and anything that contains flour or any starchy substance. The small starchy grains

need to be burst with the heat, and after this is done the mixture can be allowed to bake more slowly. If it is not done the preparation will be heavy.

Bread requires peculiar management, which must be the result of experience. As a rule, brick ovens are to be preferred to iron ones for baking bread, because the heat in them is more equal. Iron ovens, such as are attached to kitchen ranges, quickly become over-heated, which causes the surface of the bread to become hard before the heat has reached the centre of the dough, and this keeps the bread from rising. Therefore, if an iron oven must be used for this purpose, it will be found that small loaves or rolls are more easily baked than large ones.

There is one thing in baking that we must bear in mind, and that is, that "an oven will not look after itself." The numbers of carefully prepared delicacies I have seen spoilt through forgetfulness of this simple fact! Only the other day a young friend of mine announced her intention to make some buns. She collected her materials, selected the recipe, mixed the ingredients in the most satisfactory manner, and put her buns into the oven. The whole family was in a state of expectation, when suddenly an odour more strong than agreeable diffused itself through the house. The buns were burning. My friend had forgotten to look after them whilst they were in the oven, and they were all burnt as black as our shoes.

One objection to an oven is that it is not always hot when it is wanted. Those who want to do a little cooking in a hurry and find that the oven is cold and the fire low, may make a substitute for the oven out of a saucepan. Small pieces of meat, poultry, and game are excellent thus "baked in a pan." Take a common iron saucepan (a tin or an enamelled one would not answer the purpose). Melt a slice of dripping in it, and rub the meat or bird that is to be cooked all over with dripping. Place it in the pan, put on the lid, and turn it about every two or three minutes till it is equally browned all over. Cover the pan closely, draw it to the side of the fire so that the meat can cook slowly, and turn and baste it frequently. It will be done in about the same time that it would take to cook in an ordinary oven, and few would guess that it had not been dressed as usual.

V.

THE FRYING-PAN.

I ALWAYS look upon a frying-pan as the pet utensil of an incompetent cook. Those who scramble through the preparation of food, instead of cooking it intelligently, generally rely upon a frying-pan to save them from the difficulties into which their want of punctuality and forethought lead them. The result is that food from their hands is usually presented either burnt, greasy, or hard, very often all three, and it is nearly always indigestible.

There is no method of cookery that is so popular amongst a certain class of cooks as what they call frying, and there is no process that is so little understood by them as real frying. I am going to try to explain very clearly what true frying really is, and the difference between it and half frying.

You will remember that when we were talking about boiling, I said that if meat were plunged into boiling water and boiled for about five minutes, the albumen would coagulate on the surface, and make a sort of case that would keep in the goodness of the meat.

Now, frying is boiling in fat, and the cause of the difference between boiling in water and boiling in fat, is that fat can be made so very much hotter than water that the work can be done much more quickly, while at the same time a peculiar brown appearance and tasty flavour is given to the article fried. If we had a thermometer we should find that when water is boiling it reaches 212 deg. We might make a fire large enough to roast an ox, but we should never get water hotter than that. Fat, however, can be made more than twice as hot as water, and therefore it conveys heat much more quickly. We have, I dare say, all felt what it is to be scalded with boiling water, and that is bad enough ; but the pain is trifling compared to that which we suffer when we are burned with boiling fat. And that is because hot fat is so very, very hot.

If we were going to boil anything in water, we should never think of pouring a little drop of water into the bottom of a pan and laying the meat upon it, then leaving it till it was sufficiently cooked. In the same way, when we are going to fry anything, we should not be content to put a little fat in a frying-pan and cook the meat in this. And yet how many people there are who think a spoonful or two of fat is quite sufficient for frying! They would be quite horrified if we said that we must cover the article to be fried with fat before we could fry it perfectly. "Where are we to get such a quantity of fat from?" I can imagine them saying. "It would take a couple of pounds or more of fat to fry in that way. How extravagant to use a couple of pounds of fat to fry one dish!" Ah! I don't feel that the charge of extravagance can be fairly laid against me. Where, I would ask, is all the fat that these friends of ours have used for frying during the last three or four weeks? Is it not true that most of it was burnt away, and that the remainder was thrown out as soon as it was done with? If it could be collected and brought here, there would be quite enough for our purpose.

The fact is, it is not wasteful to use a quantity of fat at a time. Fat lasts heated in quantities, and if properly treated can be used again and again; indeed, I do not hesitate to say that with care it could be used thirty or forty times over.

Before we can fry perfectly, however, there are one or two more points to be considered besides the quantity of the fat. One of these is its temperature. Fat used in frying should be *hot*, so hot that it is *still*. This sounds strange, I dare say, but it is quite true. If we put a saucepan half-filled with water on the fire, it would at first be still, and as it became hot it would move about, and when it reached the boiling point it would bubble away in the most lively manner. Fat, on the contrary, would very quickly begin bubbling: then, as it grew hot, it would, if properly clarified, become quite still, and a light blue vapour would be seen rising from it. This stillness and the appearance of the vapour is the sign that it is at the proper heat for frying. It would not do to wait until the vapour became smoke, however, for that would mean that the fat was beginning to burn.

If we had a proper thermometer we might know that fat was hot enough for ordinary frying purposes when 350 degrees of heat were registered. For whitebait it would need to be higher than this, and should reach 400 degrees.

There are ways by which we can test the heat of the fat without the thermometer, and apart from the stillness of the fat, one is to throw in a little piece of the crumb of bread into the fat, and if it at once becomes a golden colour, the fat is hot and ready for whatever is to be fried. Another way is to let one single drop of cold water fall into the fat, and if this produces a loud hissing noise, the fat is hot enough for the purpose required.

Another point that must be looked after, if we would fry successfully, is that the article to be cooked should be dry. Unless it is, it will not brown properly. It is a good plan, in order to dry fish perfectly, to let it lie folded in a cloth for two or three hours before attempting to fry it, and it is very usually floured also to secure the same end. Of course the flour should be shaken off before the fish is put into the fat, especially if the fish is to be egged and breaded. Fish is, however, very good dipped in flour alone before being fried, thus saving the egg and bread crumbs.

It is evident that if we are to take as much fat for frying as I have said we ought to do, we should never get on if we used only the flat shallow pan so common in English kitchens, and known as a frying-pan. Nor is it desirable that we should do so. In the kitchens of rich people there is found what is called a frying-kettle, or deep pan for frying, which is provided with a wire lining, with a handle at each end. The cook lets her fat boil, puts whatever is to be fried on the wire, then plunges it into the hot fat, and when it has been in long enough, lifts the wire lining by the handle, and, of course, the fish or whatever is being fried is taken up with it, and the fat drains away as it rises. All that is then necessary is to place the fried articles on kitchen paper for a minute or two, to take the grease from the surface, and they are ready to serve. I said, take the grease from the surface only, for if the fat is hot, and the fish has been plunged into it as I have described, there will be no fear that it will be greasy inside. The hot fat will have hardened the outside so

securely, that not only will the goodness have been kept inside the case, but the grease will have been kept outside it.

It is not every one, however, who possesses one of these convenient frying-kettles; and when we have not got a thing we must do as well as we can without it. It is always bad workmen who quarrel with their tools. Fortunately, for small articles, an ordinary iron saucepan will supply all we want, if only it is perfectly clean. If there is anything sticking to the bottom, we must expect that it will burn and spoil our fat. If we can manage to procure a little wire frying-basket upon which our materials can be placed before they are plunged into the fat, we shall be as well off as the fortunate possessor of the finest frying-kettle in the world. A basket of this kind can be bought for about half-a-crown, or people with clever fingers can twist one together with two or three pennyworth of wire. If the basket is not to be had, we can take whatever is fried out with a skimmer, and for a great many things that will answer quite as well. If the article to be fried is large, such as a sole, for instance, we shall, if we have no frying-kettle, be obliged to use the frying-pan, only we ought to have in it enough fat to *cover* the fish. Fortunately though soles are broad, they are thin, so that this can be done without much difficulty. Very thick soles are seldom fried, the flesh being usually lifted from the bone, and cooked in fillets or small slices.

And now I must say one word about the fat that is used for frying. Lard is commonly taken for this purpose, and, unfortunately, nothing worse could be chosen, because lard always makes food look greasy; besides which it often has a peculiar taste. Oil is very good, but it is expensive, and it is rather difficult to manage, because it quickly boils over. Butter is also expensive, and it needs to be very gently heated. The very best fat that can be selected is what is called kitchen fat, that is, the skimmings of saucepans and the dripping from joints, that in nine English kitchens out of ten is put on one side by the cook and sold as her perquisite for about fourpence a pound. When the good fat is well out of the way, inferior fat, that is, lard, is bought at 8d. or 9d. per pound to take its place.

It is quite a puzzle to me to make out how this most

absurd custom arose, and a still greater one that it can be kept up. It is a comfort to think that when ladies get to understand cookery, it will soon be put a stop to. I have nothing to say against servants being well paid; if they do their work well, by all means let them have good wages; but why we should allow them to increase their wages by selling our excellent kitchen fat at less than half its value, and then expect us to spend double the money in buying fat that is not nearly so good, is beyond my comprehension. I can only imagine that the practice was begun by some one who was ignorant, and kept up by some one who was dishonest.

But if, notwithstanding all our care, we are still short of the requisite quantity of fat, what are we to do? Make it up with lard? By no means. Rather gather together every piece of fat meat upon which you can lay your hands, cut it into small pieces, put these in a saucepan, with cold water to cover, and boil over a clear fire. Leave the lid off the pan, and boil the fat gently, stirring it every now and then to keep it from burning to the bottom of the pan. When the water has evaporated we must pour the contents of the saucepan through a strainer into a basin, and our fat will be ready for use.

If the pieces of fat taken from joints still do not afford as much dripping as we need, the best thing we can do is to buy what is called by the butchers ox flare, cut it into pieces, and render it down in the same way. This flare can be had for about 6d. per pound.

Fat which is not quite pure shouid be clarified before being used. For this, break up the fat in a basin, pour boiling water over it, and stir it till it is melted, leave it till cold, then take the cake of fat up, and with a knife remove the impurities, which will have settled at the bottom. Melt it again gently in the oven in order to free it entirely from water, strain again, and it is once more ready for use.

Fat does not need to be clarified each time it is used for frying. It requires only to be strained through a metal strainer to free it from any little pieces of meat or fish that are in it. Care should be taken, however, to remove it from the fire as soon as it is done with, to prevent its becoming discoloured, and also to let it cool

a little before pouring it through the strainer, as otherwise it may melt the metal. The impurities will always settle at the bottom of the fat after melting, and they can be easily removed.

Fat that has been once used for fish is likely to have a fishy taste, therefore it should be kept exclusively for that purpose.

Now, perhaps, you will feel inclined to say, Is there nothing we can fry without a large quantity of fat? Certainly there is. We fry pancakes and omelettes and slices of bacon with a small quantity of fat. Mutton chops and beefsteaks are often fried in the same way. Strictly speaking, however, this is not to fry them, but to sauter them. Chops and steaks, however, are not at their best when cooked in a frying-pan. They are sure to be greasy when thus prepared, and are much better broiled over a clear fire. And of broiling I will speak at our next lesson.

VI.

THE GRIDIRON.

THERE is no more excellent way of cooking small things than broiling them. There are all sorts of advantages connected with broiling. It is quickly done, makes meat or fish tasty, and it preserves the goodness of the meat. When it is well done it is always approved, and when it is once understood, it is not at all difficult. The only thing that we need make up our minds to about it is, that while it is going on it must be looked after and cared for. We may put meat in the oven, or hang it on the spit, or place it in a saucepan and leave it for a while ; but if we tried to attend to any other business while engaged with the gridiron, most woeful would be the result.

Therefore, if you make up your minds to broil anything (and their is no greater delicacy than a well-broiled chop or steak), determine that you will give your exclusive attention to it during the ten or twelve minutes that it is on the fire.

And in order that you may do this, you must think about all the outside details beforehand. The first of these is the meat. Small portions of food are reserved for broiling, and as the method adopted for one thing calls for knowledge that is useful with all, I will take a steak as a sample of what is to be done. There are various kinds of beef-steak, but the best kinds of all for broiling are rump-steak and fillet-steak ; and of these, in my opinion, rump-steak is to be preferred. Fillet-steak is exceedingly tender, but it does not contain quite as much flavour as rump-steak. The beef should have been well kept, and the steak should be freshly cut from it. If it is cut some hours before it is wanted, some of the gravy will run from it. Also, it should be cut an inch, or very nearly an inch, thick. I dare say there will be a little difficulty in getting the butcher to cut it of an equal thickness all the way along. If he is simply ordered to do it, he won't do it ; but if you go and stand by him while he cuts it off, and impress what you want upon him, you will very likely get it. But supposing—and it is always well to be prepared for all sorts of "supposings" —the weather is frosty and the meat is frozen ; then we must be careful to put our steak into a warm kitchen for an hour or two, that it may thaw before it is cooked. If it were cooked as it is it would most certainly be tough.

The next consideration is the fire. This must be perfectly clear, bright, and red ; and in order that it may be so, it must be made in good time, so that the coal may have time to get hot throughout, and not be smoky and throwing out little jets of gassy flame. Broiling could not be satisfactorily done with a fire that had been lately mended, and had only black, smoky coal on the top. The best fire for the purpose is either a coal fire that has burnt low, or a fire that was made up with cinders free from dust.

Then there are the gridirons, for there should be two gridirons in every kitchen, one for meat and one for fish ; indeed it would be an advantage if three gridirons were provided, and one of them kept especially for bloaters, which are so strongly flavoured that they generally leave their odour behind them. There are various kinds of gridirons. The ordinary thick iron ones answer very

well indeed for ordinary purposes, though there is a superior kind with fluted bars, by means of which a good deal of the gravy that would otherwise be wasted is saved.

Very much more important, however, than the kind of gridiron is its cleanliness. Perhaps you will say, "Oh, cleanliness; of course everything we use is *clean*. That goes without saying." It does, and I am afraid, very often without doing either. At any rate, I don't think there is a gridiron now in use that I should like to use without giving it a little additional rub beforehand. Meat comes into direct contact with the bars of a gridiron. When we fry anything, the meat is covered with the fat; when we boil anything it is surrounded by water; when we roast or bake anything, it is basted with dripping; but there is nothing between it and the gridiron, and if the latter is left at all dusty or grimy, both the food and those who partake of it get the benefit thereof. This is why it is desirable to have a distinct gridiron for fish. Beef-steak *à la* bloater is not agreeable.

Therefore, let a gridiron be well cleaned as soon as it is done with, that is, washed thoroughly all over with hot water, soda, and a little sand; no soap. If the bars are bright, to begin with, they should be kept so by being rubbed with scouring paper. Take particular care to rub in and between the bars; and when it is quite clean hang the gridiron in some airy place where it will be free from dust. Before using it, make it hot, and wipe it well with a piece of clean paper; then make it hot again, rub it with clean mutton suet to prevent the meat sticking to the bars, and it is ready. As it is very important that the meat should be taken straight from the fire to the table, we must be quite sure, before we lay the meat on the gridiron, that everything is quite ready for it, and that the cloth is laid, the dish and plates quite hot, and everything likely to be wanted provided. If, when the steak is done we have to spend a minute looking for the salt here, and two more making the dishes hot there, our broil will not be perfection, and, of course, nothing less will satisfy us. The French always season the steak with pepper and salt, and brush it over with oil before broiling it, and the plan, though unusual in English kitchens, is to be recommended. The gridiron should be placed slanting to begin with, and

should be about two inches above the fire. It is our object to surround the meat as soon as possible with a brown coat that will keep in the juice, and therefore we expose it to a fierce heat at first. As time goes on we may raise it to the height of about five inches. And, above all, we must remember to turn the steak every two minutes till it is done.

The French are, as a rule, so much cleverer than we in cookery, that when we do have the advantage of them, I think we may be pardoned if we make the most of it; and this is such an opportunity. They make it a practice to turn the steak only once; we turn it continually, and our way is the more successful of the two, as well as the more reasonable, because, by being continually turned, the inside of the meat is cooked gently, and so is made tender. Sometimes the steak is turned every minute, instead of every two minutes, and then it needs to be cooked a little longer.

I should hope that no one who has read these pages, and I am sure no one who has tried to carry them into practice at all, would think of putting a fork into the meat in order to turn it. It will have been seen that almost the chief object in cooking is to keep in the juices, and of course, if a fork were thrust into the lean the gravy would escape through the holes made by the fork. Steak-tongs are frequently used to turn meat on the gridiron; but even with them care should be taken not to squeeze the meat. A spoon and a knife will help us to turn the steak as well as anything, the flat side of the knife being used. If a fork is used, it should be placed in the fat or skin of the meat.

I said that the gridiron should be held slantwise over the fire, and the object of this is that the fat which drops from the meat should run downwards instead of dropping into the fire, where it would be likely to make a smoky flare. This flare is not entirely objectionable, because it helps to harden the outside of the meat. If, however, there should be too much of it, the gridiron should be lifted up for a minute and a little salt sprinkled upon the coal, and this will do as much as anything to get rid of the blaze.

As to the time that a steak will take to broil, it is im-

possible to speak exactly. If the steak were an inch thick, and the fire fierce and clear, and the gridiron were placed from two to five inches above the embers, and the steak were turned every two minutes, perhaps it would be safe to say it would take *about* twelve minutes. But experience alone can decide this for a certainty, and there are details which must cause variation. What is wanted is that the steak should look a very dark brown, almost black, outside, and a deep red, not blue, within. If when pressed the meat feels perfectly firm without being hard, it is most likely done. All that now remains is to raise the steak from the gridiron for a minute to let the fat drop from it, put it on a hot dish, and send it to table hot. It will be a dish fit for a king.

Broiling is sometimes carried on before, instead of over a fire. The arrangement is necessary because with some closed ranges it cannot be done any other way. The same precautions need to be observed in the one case as in the other.

And now we have gone through the five principal processes of cookery. I have tried to describe them to you clearly, and I hope I have succeeded in showing you not only that we should do so and so, but *why* we should do it. A little later I hope to go further into detail on the subject, and to give one or two particulars as to the cooking of various dishes. In all of them, however, we must remember to carry out these useful general principles. If any departure from them is desirable, there is a reason for the change, and it will be well worth our while to find out what this is.

There is a good deal of talk at the present time about the higher education of women, and girls now pursue studies that would never have been dreamt of twenty-five years ago. I am very glad of it. I hope the result will be that they will do their work in the world better than their mothers and grandmothers have done before them. Judging by those of my own acquaintance, I believe the girls of to-day are earnest in purpose and wish to make the most of their opportunities. But amongst these other studies, I do hope they will take an interest in, and endeavour to obtain a knowledge of, cookery and needle-work. Latin and mathematics may strengthen their

minds, and enable them to take broader views of things, and so make them intelligent companions and friends; but cookery and needlework will teach them to do a woman's special work; which is to provide for the comforts of every-day life, and thus to render home happy.

VII.

PUDDINGS.

PUDDINGS are by many supposed to belong especially to children and young people, but there are to be found here and there in the world "grown-ups" who say that they, too, are very fond of them. By this they mean that they are partial to particular puddings that have taken their fancy. There is pudding and pudding; and we may enjoy one kind, and be very decidedly indifferent to another kind, and puddings are of all sorts.

It would be a very disgraceful thing if, after all the talk we have had together about cookery, the girls belonging to our cooking class were not able to make puddings. I propose, therefore, that we give a little attention to the subject, and discuss the general principles connected with their concoction.

Puddings may be rich and expensive, or they may be plain and economical; but if they are to be good and wholesome, the ingredients used in making them must be fresh and of good quality. If one of the articles used in making a pudding be in the least tainted and musty, the pudding into which it enters will be spoilt.

Especially is this the case with eggs, suet, and milk. The taste of suet that is not perfectly sweet is particularly disagreeable. The taint may seem very slight before the suet is mixed in the pudding and cooked; but if it is there at all, heat will bring it out, and it is sure to be obtrusively evident when the pudding is served. In the same way, milk that shows a very feeble disposition to turn when cold will act in a more decided manner when mixed with eggs and baked, and will curdle and spoil the pudding altogether.

As to eggs, their condition is perhaps more important than that of any thing that can be used. One bad egg introduced into a pudding would spoil the effect of a dozen new laid ones. However anxious a girl might be to mix a pudding quickly, I would advise her never to allow herself to break a number of eggs into a basin without first trying them separately in a cup. She may have bought them at the best shop in the town, and paid the highest price for them, but there is an element of uncertainty about eggs that no good cook can afford to disregard.

There is one thing connected with eggs that always astonishes me very much, and that is, how few cooks trouble to remove the "speck," or thick knotted substance that lies by the side of the yolk. When the egg is turned into a cup, the speck can be taken out easily with the point of a fork, and it is very unpleasant to come into contact with it while eating. We are often told that, "in delicate cookery," the specks should be removed from eggs. They should be removed in all cookery, for they never improve a dish, and they are always objectionable.

When there is time for it the whites and the yolks of eggs should be beaten separately, the yolks put in first and the whisked whites dashed in at the last moment before cooking the pudding. The reason of this is that white of egg can be so easily whisked into a foam, and if this can be introduced into the pudding before it has time to fall, the little air bubbles that were beaten in it, and that made the white of egg rise, will expand still further with the heat, and will lift up the pudding in the same way that they lifted up the white of egg, and so make it light.

When suet is used in making puddings it should have all the skin and fibre taken away, and be chopped till it is as fine as oatmeal. If we have a chopping-board this can be soon done, but if not it is rather a troublesome business; nevertheless it must be well chopped, for we should never be willing that our puddings should have large lumps of fat in them. If a knife must be used in chopping suet, it should be a very sharp one; and we shall find that the best plan we can adopt is to shred the suet finely first, then turn the pieces round and chop them with

the point of the knife, raising the upper part so as to make the knife a sort of lever. We must, of course, remember to sprinkle a little flour over the suet every now and then to keep it from being sticky.

Sometimes it happens that suet is objected to altogether. When this is the case, butter, or, for plain puddings, sweet dripping may be substituted for it. A smaller quantity of butter than of suet will be needed, so that if we were going to use half a pound of suet we should find that six ounces of butter would be amply sufficient for our purpose.

Currants are a particularly dirty fruit. They should, therefore, always be washed before they are used. The best way of doing this is to put them into a colander, sprinkle a little flour over them, then rub them round and round for a minute or two, shaking the colander vigorously now and then to detach the stalks, and make them fall through the holes. When this is done we may pour cold water gently over them, drain them, lay them on a towel, and dry them gradually at the mouth of a cool oven or before the fire. When quite dry, spread them on a white cloth or on white paper, and look over them carefully to discover the stones if there are any. As currants must be dry when used, they should be washed as soon as they come in from the grocer, and be put into jars for use. If they have not been washed, it is better to content oneself with sprinkling flour over them and rubbing them, a few at the time, between the folds of a soft cloth, rather than to wash them and to use them wet, for they will be very likely to make a pudding heavy.

Sultanas should be prepared like currants. Raisins should have all stones taken from them, and be chopped small before being used. Sultanas are not nearly so full of flavour as ordinary raisins.

Candied peel should be freed from the sugar and cut into very thin strips before being used. There are three sorts of peel ordinarily used. The thick green peel is citron, the dark peel is orange, the light peel is lemon. Orange peel is not so hard and difficult to cut as lemon peel.

When fresh orange or lemon peel is used for flavouring, it should be grated off on a coarse grater so as to leave

the bitter white part of the fruit untouched. When this method is not convenient the thin yellow rind may be cut into thin strips for use. When flavouring essences are used they should be dropped into a small portion of liquid before being added to the pudding. It is not safe to drop them at once into the pudding mixture because a larger portion might inadvertently be put in than is wanted, and this would quite spoil the taste of the pudding. A very small pinch of salt, sufficient to bring out other flavours, though not to proclaim its own presence, should be put into all puddings, even sweet ones.

When bread crumbs are wanted for puddings, they should be made by rubbing stale bread through a wire sieve. Sometimes it is considered desirable, for economical reasons, to use stale crusts of bread. When this is the case the bread should be scalded with boiling milk or water, and afterwards drained thoroughly and beaten up with a fork.

Sugar should always be sparingly used in making puddings, especially boiled ones. The reason for this is, that the sugar becomes liquid when cooked, and this may make the mixture too thin.

Puddings are either baked, boiled, or steamed. The dish or mould in which a pudding is baked, should always be buttered well before the mixture is put in it. The heat of the oven required for baking puddings is not always the same. Custard puddings of all kinds, whether made of eggs and milk only, or of eggs and milk mixed with grain, whole or ground, should be gently baked or boiled ; if put into a fierce oven, they would be watery. Batter puddings, on the contrary, should be put into a well heated, though not fierce oven ; if cooked slowly they will not be light. They should also be served as soon as possible after they are taken from the oven. All puddings are done when they are quite firm in the centre. Puddings that are sufficiently solid to admit of it should not be served in the dish in which they are baked, but should be turned upon a dish and have white sugar sifted thickly over them. And if it should happen that they set and acquire colour before they are baked through, a sheet of paper may be laid over them to prevent their being over done. Boiled puddings may

either be tied in a cloth, or put in a buttered mould. Opinions differ as to which of the two methods is to be preferred. Soyer says that every pudding is better cooked in a mould or basin than in a cloth. Other authorities, quite competent to speak on the subject, are in favour of a cloth. They tell us that all puddings made of pastry, or which contain bread or suet, as well as batter puddings, though they may look best when boiled in a mould, are lighter and more equally cooked when boiled in a cloth, and in my opinion they are quite right. Custard puddings, however, of all kinds may be boiled in a mould, though even they would be better to be steamed. All puddings that are boiled in a mould should have a buttered paper laid over them before they are covered or tied up.

When puddings are boiled, they should be plunged into plenty of fast boiling water, and kept boiling until done. If the water boil away and more has to be added, it must be put in boiling. A wooden skewer or a dish should always be placed under them in the saucepan, in order to keep them from sticking to the pan. The pudding cloths also should be well looked after. They should never be washed with soap, but should be laid in cold water as soon as they are done with, afterwards washed in hot water, dried in the open air, and folded away to keep them from getting dusty. Before being used again, they should be rinsed out of boiling water, squeezed dry, and floured well.

When bread, or anything that is likely to swell, enters into the composition of a pudding, room should be allowed for its probable enlargement, and it should be loosely tied. Light puddings should stand a few minutes after being taken from the pan, before they are turned out. Solid puddings, on the contrary, should be served immediately, though they may be plunged in and out of cold water before being turned out. Puddings made of pastry should be closely tied, and served as quickly as possible after they are taken up, as they soon become heavy. It is a good plan to make a hole in the top to allow the steam to escape, after turning a pudding of this kind out. Puddings boiled in a basin need to be boiled longer than those that are in a tin mould. Those made with suet

and flour should be stiffly mixed ; if made too thin they will break when turned out.

Light puddings are more delicate when steamed instead of boiled. For this they should be put into a mould, and have a piece of buttered paper laid over the top. They should then be put into a saucepan with boiling water to come half way up the mould, but not to touch the paper. If the water touches the paper the latter will become moist all the way through, and that will spoil the pudding. Keep the water boiling round the pudding, and cover the saucepan closely. When the preparation is firm in the centre it is sufficiently cooked.

In summer-time cold puddings are frequently preferred to hot ones. When these are well made and nicely flavoured they are very good, and people who are tired of puddings in general, and imagine that they do not care for them, are very often induced to partake of cold ones. I will, before closing, give recipes for two of these puddings to be served cold, which, so far as I know, are not very commonly met with. The first one, the diplomatic pudding, is a superior dish for high days and festive occasions ; the second, red rice, is moderately economical, and is very delicious.

Diplomatic Pudding.—Take one ounce of stale sponge cakes, one ounce of ratafias, both crushed small, a desert-spoonful of white sugar, and a quarter of an ounce of gelatine. Soak the gelatine in milk, then melt it in a saucepan. Boil half a pint of milk and the sugar in a stew-pan, then pour it over the yolks of two eggs, and add the whole of one previously whisked. Stir the custard over the fire till it thickens, put with it the melted gelatine, and pour it over the biscuits, and stir the mixture briskly. Take half-a-pint of clear jelly nicely flavoured. If it is not thought worth while to make jelly for the purpose, it may be bought in a bottle of the grocer ; it will then have to be flavoured. Take a small plain mould, scald it with boiling water, then rinse it out with cold water. Ornament it with angelica, cut into strips, or with pistachio nuts, blanched like almonds, and chopped small. Pour gently into it, not to disturb the ornamentation, jelly, to cover the bottom to the depth of half an inch. Let it get quite stiff, then put a gallipot on

the jelly, and fill up the mould on the outside of the gallipot with jelly. Let this also get quite stiff, then take away the gallipot, and fill the vacancy thus left with the mixture already prepared. Let it stand till firm. Turn it out very carefully upon a glass dish, and serve. It will look and taste like a very good pudding surrounded with jelly.

The ornamentation of this pudding may be varied in many ways. For instance, two or three spoonfuls of the jelly may be coloured with cochineal, and this may be put very lightly here and there in the mould, which is turned upside down till the jelly is stiff. Or the jelly may be coloured red altogether, or dried cherries or preserved fruits may be used for garnishing instead of pistachios. The quantities I have given here will make a very small pudding. If a larger one is wanted the proportions must be increased.

Red Rice may be made either with fresh fruit or preserved fruit. It is best made with fresh fruit, red currants and raspberries being more suitable than any other kinds of fruit. Take a pint and a half of ripe red currants; pick them, and put them into a jar, with a pint and a half of water; set the jar in a saucepan of boiling water, and let the water boil round them till the juice of the fruit begins to flow, then add half a pound of raspberries, and stew a quarter of an hour longer. Squeeze the juice from the fruit and sweeten it; mix four tablespoonfuls of ground rice, very smoothly, with a little of the liquid (cold). Boil the strained juice, stir the ground rice into it, and keep stirring till it is thick, and leaves the saucepan with the spoon. Pour it out, put two or three drops of cochineal with it to improve the colour, turn it into a damp mould, and leave it in a cool place till wanted. If preserved fruit has to be used, take a pound jar of raspberry jam, and boil it with water to fill a quart mould; strain away the juice, put two tablespoonfuls of red currant jelly with it, and two or three drops of lemon juice; then boil it with ground rice, as described above. Cochineal may occasionally be dispensed with, when the juice of fresh fruit is used, but will certainly be needed for preserved fruit. Red rice is exceedingly good served with cream. If preferred, corn flour or arrowroot may be used to make it, instead of ground rice.

VIII.

SOUFFLES.

BEFORE leaving puddings entirely, I think girls would be glad to know how to make the very delicious superior puddings called soufflés. Soufflés are troublesome, because there are so many little points about them which seem trifling, but which really must be attended to; but these are not very difficult when one has got into the way of doing them. Anyhow, great care must be taken with them, and the directions I am about to give must be followed *exactly*. There must be no guess work with soufflés. If a girl is inclined to say to to herself, "Why be so particular about small things? I dare say they do not really signify," her soufflé will be a failure. Soufflés may be either baked or steamed. When they are baked they are served in the tin in which they are cooked. In this case a frill of white paper or a folded napkin made hot is fastened round the tin, or if there is such a thing at hand the mould is put into a plated soufflé dish kept for the purpose. It is not every one, however, who possesses a plated dish of this kind; and when we have to manage without one care must be taken to have the paper frill or the folded napkin quite ready to pop over the soufflé, for it must be served straight from the oven before it has time to fall, or its excellence will be gone. Many cooks have a hot salamander—or, what does just as well, a red-hot shovel—ready, and hold it over the soufflé on its passage from the kitchen to the dining-room door, in order to keep it up.

I should, however, recommend a girl, until she acquired a little skill in this direction, to steam the soufflé instead of baking it. A steamed soufflé does not sink so quickly as a baked one; it is easier to manage also; and, in my opinion, quite as good. Also, neither soufflé dish nor frill is needed for it. It is simply turned upon a hot dish,

and the sauce which, of course, was made ready for it, is poured round it, when it is ready to serve.

One word, however, I must say by way of warning. Keep the tin that is used for steaming soufflés *exclusively* for steaming soufflés; never let it be put into the oven, and do not allow a tin that is used to bake soufflés to be washed out when done with. Scrape it well and wipe it out with a dry cloth or a piece of clean paper. In making a soufflé, the first thing that we have to do is to prepare the tin. It should be an ordinary plain tin mould that will hold a pint and a half. Butter it well inside, using the fingers in doing this so that every part may be reached. Cut a round of paper, butter this also, and lay it at the bottom. Now take a large sheet of kitchen paper, fold it to make a band that will go round the tin, spread butter with a knife on the part that will be above the tin, and place the paper outside so that it will rise two or three inches above the rim, and tie it on securely. Put 1 oz. of butter in a small stewpan, melt it, then stir in 1 oz. flour. When quite smooth, add a dessert-spoonful of fine white sugar and one gill, or a quarter of a pint, of milk. Keep stirring the sauce till it boils and thickens. When it leaves the sides of the stewpan quite clean it is done, but it should not be taken off before this point is reached. Lift the stewpan off the fire, then take three eggs, break them into a cup, divide the whites from the yolks, and put the yolks one at a time into the mixture. When all are well beaten in, add fifteen drops of vanilla, or any other suitable flavouring.

It is a little dangerous to say how much flavouring should be put into anything: firstly, because tastes differ about flavours: and, secondly, because essences vary in strength. Vanilla essence, for example, is very much stronger when the bottle is freshly opened than it is after it has been used three or four times. Therefore, as I said when we were speaking of puddings, it is best to put a small quantity of essence in at a time, and taste it before adding more. If a newly-opened bottle of vanilla is used, fifteen drops will be too much.

We must now whisk the whites of the eggs, with one more white added to make four whites, till we have a firm stiff froth, so firm that we can cut it through with a knife.

(In making soufflés we must always have more whites than yolks of eggs.) If we have an egg whisk we can soon make the eggs firm; but if not we should put the whites on a plate, and beat them with a clean, broad-bladed knife that has been dipped in cold water and wiped dry. Also we shall find that the eggs will froth much more quickly if beaten in a draught. When they are quite firm stir them lightly into the mixture, and pour it into the tin already prepared. Have ready a saucepan with boiling water that will come half way up the mould, and that will not reach the paper tied round the tin. Lay a piece of buttered paper on the top of the pudding. Put on the lid and steam the pudding till done. When it is firm in the middle if touched with the finger it is sufficiently cooked.

There is, however, still one more point to be attended to, and that is, the soufflé must be gently steamed. If the water is allowed to boil fast round it, it will be spoiled. It will take from twenty to thirty minutes.

While the pudding is being steamed we may make the sauce. Put a quarter of a pint of cold water in a saucepan, and add one ounce of loaf sugar and a tablespoonful of jam; boil together till the sauce is reduced to half the quantity, and add four or five drops of lemon juice. When the soufflé is turned into a dish, strain the sauce round it, being careful not to touch the sides, and it is ready to serve.

If we think over the cost of the ingredients of which this pudding is composed, we shall find that it costs eightpence. A quarter of a pint of milk, one penny; four eggs, fourpence; butter for greasing the paper and the tin, twopence; flour, flavouring, and sugar, one penny. The sauce will cost twopence-halfpenny; that is, if we allow twopence for the jam, a halfpenny for the sugar, and make ourselves a present of the four drops of lemon juice. I do not think any one will say that, considering this is a superior pudding, it is an expensive one.

By following the above directions soufflés may be made of all kinds of farinaceous substances, such as arrowroot, ground rice, or tapioca, also of sponge biscuits and chocolate. The flavouring also may be varied to suit the taste. Some people like a soufflé flavoured with strong coffee.

If we wish to make a coffee soufflé, instead of the vanilla soufflé, the recipe for making which I have given, we should have to substitute very strong coffee and cream for the milk and vanilla. It may, however, be useful if I give the details for making another very delicious dish, lemon soufflé. Clean a fresh lemon, peel the rind off very thinly, being very careful not to take the thick white pith, which is always bitter, put it into a stewpan with half a pint of milk till the flavour is extracted, then strain it; melt an ounce of butter in a small stewpan; stir in two dessert-spoonfuls of flour and one dessert-spoonful of arrowroot, and when quite smooth and well cooked, add a dessert spoonful of castor sugar, and, very gradually the milk. When the sauce is thick and smooth, add the yolks of three eggs, one at a time, as in the first instance, and the whites of four eggs, and steam or bake the soufflé according to the directions already given.

IX.

PIES AND TARTS.

ALL girls, I imagine, like making pastry. Indeed, in a girl's mind, a cook is usually a person who can make a pie. If we try to persuade a girl to practise cookery, and she is inclined to yield to our persuasion, the first thing she will do to show her willingness will be to offer to make some pies.

On the whole I think she would act very sensibly in doing this. Making pastry is very pleasant work, and when pies are well made and well baked they are very satisfactory things to look at as well as to eat, and they exist as tangible proofs of the skill of the maker. Somehow a pie is not so fleeting and evanescent as a stew or a soup. These are generally demolished as soon as they are accomplished facts, and in the course of a couple of hours their glory is a thing of the past; but pies remain (for a short time only). They are carried off into the larder, and are allowed to go cold, and the cook can if

she likes pay them a visit and look at them and feast her eyes on the work of her hands.

We will therefore spend a little time in talking over the methods to be adopted in making pastry; and first we have to consider our utensils and materials.

A good cook always collects together everything that she is likely to want before she begins to work. By this means she saves time. If she were to put her hands into the flour, and then leave it and clear them while she fetched a rolling-pin or a dish, she would be half as long again over her business as she needed to be. She is wise when she "lets her head save her heels"—as the saying is,—by first thinking over and then collecting her utensils and ingredients, and putting them in one place, so that they will be at hand when wanted.

In order to make pastry it is necessary to have a pastry board, a rolling pin, a flour dredger, a knife, some flour, salt, butter, or sweet dripping, water, an egg or two, a little sugar, and, if approved, some baking-powder. There must be also a clean basin, some pie dishes, tartlet tins, baking sheets, and either meat, fruit, jam, or whatever else is intended to constitute the contents of the pies or tarts. With these contents, however, I have at present nothing to do. I shall confine myself entirely to the pastry.

It is, I suppose, scarcely necessary to say to young ladies that every one of the utensils used in making pastry must be scrupulously clean; that goes without any saying.

Pastry boards are usually made of common wood, although superior boards are made of box-wood. Marble slabs, are, however, much better than boards to roll pastry upon, because they are cold; and in order to make pastry light and puffy, it is very desirable that the paste should be kept cool. It is on this account that a cool, light hand is wanted, and that pastry should be made in a cool place. When a marble slab is not to be had, a large slate, or even a smooth tile is sometimes made to fill its place. Girls will find that their hands will be cooler if washed in hot water a few minutes before setting to work. The best biscuit flour is usually taken for making pastry. When superior pies are wanted, however, it is worth while to use what is called Vienna flour, which

is flour that has been passed through silken sieves in order to make it very fine. This flour is a good deal more expensive than biscuit flour, and it makes finer, lighter pastry. For ordinary purposes, however, the biscuit flour will be quite good enough.

As with Vienna flour, so with eggs. Eggs are not needed for ordinary pastry, and very good pies and tarts may be made without them, but at the same time an egg and a few drops of lemon-juice improve pastry. They make it more elastic, more workable, and also make it look and taste richer. It would, however, be far better to leave out an egg altogether rather than to use one that was not quite sweet and good.

There is a great deal of difference of opinion about the use of baking-powder in making cakes and pastry. For my own part, I am in favour of baking-powder for ordinary purposes. For one thing, its use is to be recommended on economical grounds, because less butter or shortening is needed when baking-powder is used. Also, baking-powder makes pastry lighter, and consequently more digestible. It must be remembered, however, that when baking-powder is used the pastry should be mixed quickly, and baked as soon as possible after it is mixed.

There are four kinds of pastry in constant use amongst us : puff paste, short paste, suet crust for boiled puddings, and what is called hot-water paste for raised pies. Puff paste is considered the best of these ; it is the richest and lightest, most difficult to make, and very indigestible. A good course of puff paste would, I should think, be enough to give an elephant dyspepsia. Nevertheless, it is very much liked, and I expect the girls would be disappointed if I did not describe how it should be made. There is one consideration that may encourage us in trying it, and that is that if we can make good puff paste we can make all other kinds of pastry. It will not do, however, for us to be discouraged if our first attempt is not successful. Nothing but practice will give skill in this direction.

It is always a great help to understand the idea of a thing as well as the method. The idea in puff pastry is to have the butter and the paste separate, so that the pastry shall form a kind of sandwich, in which very thin

light layers of paste shall be separated from each other by layers of butter, and the lighter and thinner these layers can be made the better the puff paste is. A very clever cook once said that puff paste to be perfect must consist of eighty-four thin films of paste, alternated with eighty-three of butter. I do not think there are many cooks who could achieve these conditions. But at any rate girls will understand that is the ideal, and the nearer they can approach to it the more successful they will be.

It is for the purpose of keeping these films perfect and separate that the pastry is cooled between the "turns." If the paste were to be sticky and the butter hot, the films could not be kept distinct; therefore, between the rollings or turns puff paste is put away on ice or in a cool place, that the layers may become firm and not mix together in a mass. In winter time ice may be dispensed with, and the pastry can be put in a cool larder for half an hour. But in summer time it is very desirable that ice should be at hand.

Now as to the method to be adopted. Supposing we wished to make a quantity of puff paste sufficient for a small pie, we should take a quarter of a pound of flour which has been sifted and is thoroughly dry, a small pinch of salt, the yolk of one egg, a quarter of a pound of butter which has been squeezed in a cloth to free it from moisture, and six or eight drops of lemon-juice. We pile the flour on the pastry board or slab, and mix the salt with it, make a little well in the centre, and put into it the egg yolk and lemon-juice. We now with two fingers of the right hand draw the flour into the egg yolk, and add very gradually as much water as is required to mix the whole, till the paste is of the consistency of the butter. When this point is reached the paste should be worked and kneaded on the slab till it feels smooth, soft, and elastic, when it may be left untouched for a minute or two.

The next thing to be done is to flour the slab lightly, put the paste upon it, flour this also, and roll it gently till it is large enough to hold the squeezed butter. If too much flour is used the pastry will be spoilt. We then place the butter in the centre of the paste, and fold the four sides over to cover it completely. We make the edges meet by pressing them together, and put the paste

thus prepared upon ice or in a cool place for about ten minutes. We now roll it till it is about the third of an inch thick, and in doing this we must be careful that the butter does not break through the paste in any direction. Also we must remember to have the paste straight before us, and to roll it straight, otherwise the flakes will be one-sided. We then fold the paste into three equal parts, flatten it lightly with the rolling-pin again, then turn it round so that we leave the rough edges towards us, and roll it again, fold it, and put it away for a quarter of an hour, and repeat until it has had seven turns or rolls, and been put upon ice three times, or after every other turn. When the last turn has been given we again leave it in a cold place for a few minutes, roll it till it is a quarter of an inch thick, and it is ready for use.

Pastry thus made will rise to five times its original height.

When a girl has once learnt to make puff pastry well she may vary her method a little, without doing much harm ; that is to say, she may use rather less butter, or rather more flour, or in cold weather she may shorten the time allowed for cooling ; her experience will enable her to decide how far she may depart from the regulated routine. It will be obvious that the method I have described is rather a troublesome one. It need not be so, however, if other cooking is being done at the time, for nothing can be easier than to put the pastry away, proceed with other work, then at the right time fetch it out, give it a roll, put it away again, and repeat until it is finished.

I have known cooks make very good flaky pastry without putting it to cool at all. They simply made the paste, rolled it out, divided the butter into equal portions, spread one portion upon the paste as they would spread butter upon bread, floured it well, folded it over, and rolled it ; then buttered, floured, and rolled it again until the requisite quantity of butter had been used. If there were time to let it lie they would seize the opportunity of doing so, but otherwise they would leave it.

It will be understood that puff paste is used for superior pastry of all kinds, meat pies, tarts, patties, and vol-au-vents. There is, however, an easier way of making superior

pastry which answers excellently for pies and tarts. The following is the method adopted in making it. Take half a pound of flour, six ounces of butter, a pinch of salt, six drops of lemon-juice, and the yolk of an egg. Prepare the ingredients as for true puff paste; that is, squeeze the butter to free it from moisture, and be sure that the flour is dry and sifted. Chop the butter in the flour with a knife; then pile the flour on the board; make a well in the centre, and put into it the salt, egg, yolk, and lemon-juice. Add the water gradually, and mix it in lightly with the fingers, to make a light not over stiff paste. Flour the rolling-pin and the board to prevent the pastry sticking, but do not put too much flour in, or the pastry will be spoilt. Roll it well three times, and after each roll fold it in two, and turn it with the rough edges to the front. If it makes a crackling sound as it is being rolled it is a sign that it is good. If liked, this pastry may be made with half a pound of flour, four ounces of butter, half a teaspoonful of baking-powder, and dripping may be used instead of butter.

X.

SHORT PASTE, SUET PASTE, AND RAISED PIES.

I SAID in our last lesson that the idea in puff paste is to have the butter and paste separate, so that the paste shall be made up of a number of layers, divided from each other by layers of butter. In short paste, on the other hand, the idea is for the butter to be *mixed with* the flour by kneading, not rolling. Indeed, one great secret in making good short-crust is to roll it as little as possible. After the butter and flour have been moistened with water, the paste should be rolled *once only* to make it smooth and of a good shape.

Short paste is much more wholesome than puff paste. It is used chiefly for fruit pies and tartlets. It is made more easily, and is much more commonly met with than puff paste, which is usually regarded as a luxury.

In short paste, as in puff paste, the addition of an egg and of a few drops of lemon-juice enriches the paste and helps to make it workable. These ingredients are not, however, absolutely necessary, and very good pastry may be made without them.

Short paste is "superior," or "good," or "plain," according to the quality and quantity of the materials used in making it. In very rich pastry equal quantities of butter and flour would be used. Superior crust might, however, be made with less than half the weight of butter than of flour, and good economical pastry may be made with a smaller proportion of butter and a little baking-powder. Good plain pastry may be made with sweet soft beef dripping, such as is obtained from joints, or produced by rendering down any kind of soft and sweet beef fat.

A great many people have a strong objection to pastry made with dripping. I cannot quite understand the delicacy of appetite which refuses good beef dripping and accepts cheap common butter. If butter is wanted, let *good* butter be used; but if it is a question between dripping that is fresh, soft, and sweet, and questionable or cooking butter, I should say by all means choose the dripping. A large proportion of the composition sold under the name is not butter at all—it is coloured animal fat. Why should we not use the animal fat, *i.e.*, dripping, and omit the colouring? The difference in price between the adulterated article and the real one is worth consideration. And I hope the girls who attend our class will be too sensible to scorn economy in cookery. A really good cook is never a wasteful one, and it is wasteful to purchase cheap butter for every-day pastry when there is in the larder sweet dripping that could be employed instead. In making pastry a light cool hand is worth more than a pennyworth of colouring matter.

It must not be supposed, however, that I recommend the use of all kinds of dripping in making pastry. Fresh soft beef dripping is excellent for the purpose, but mutton dripping is not so. It has a way of making pastry taste like tallow-candles; and as Europeans have not the same taste as the Esquimaux, this flavour is not popular. Though mutton dripping is not to be made into pies,

however, good hard mutton fat, finely shred, is almost as good as beef suet for making paste for boiled puddings. Lard is much liked by some cooks for making pastry. It is, however, better when mixed with butter or dripping than when used alone. Bacon fat also, if not too much smoked, may be employed to make pastry for meat pies.

The water used in mixing pastry should be added gradually and mixed thoroughly. If a large quantity is poured in at once the pastry may be made over moist, and then an undue proportion of flour will have to be added before the pastry can be rolled. It should be remembered that it is scarcely possible to give the exact measure of water that will be needed in making pastry, because some flours absorb more moisture than others. An experienced cook could tell in a moment by touching the pastry whether or not it was of the right consistency. All one can say to the inexperienced is that pastry should be smooth and stiff, but not too stiff. If over moist it will stick to the rolling-pin or the pastry-board ; if too stiff it will not be light when baked.

We will suppose, therefore, that we wish to make superior short crust ; how shall we proceed? We must put six ounces of flour on a board, and mix with it a very small pinch of salt. We then rub into it with the fingers four ounces of sweet butter, and keep rubbing until the butter is quite lost to sight and the flour looks like fine oatmeal. If the pastry is intended for a fruit-pie or a tartlet, an ounce of finely-powdered white sugar may now be added. We then make a well in the centre of the flour, and break into it the yolk of an egg. We put on this two drops of lemon-juice and a very little (about a tablespoonful) of cold water ; mix all, flour, egg, and water together with two fingers (or if the cook has not a cool hand, she may mix the paste with the blade of a clean knife), and add more water gradually till there is a smooth stiff paste ; knead this lightly, roll out once, and the pastry is ready. Of course, if the egg is not considered necessary it must be omitted.

If plain short crust is wanted, we put one pound of flour into a bowl with a pinch of salt and a heaped teaspoonful of baking-powder. Rub into this six ounces of

clarified dripping ; add cold water to make a smooth stiff paste, knead lightly, roll out once and use.

The excellence of pastry depends very much upon its being properly baked. The best pastry that ever was mixed would be spoilt if the oven was not exactly right. If an oven is not hot enough the pastry will sink away from the edges of the dish and will be heavy. If the oven is too hot the pastry will be burnt or will stiffen without rising. The surest way of testing the heat of the oven is to bake a small piece of pastry before putting the pie or tart into it. Another way is to sprinkle a little flour upon the oven shelf. If it turn a bright brown in a few seconds the oven is hot enough. If it turn black the oven is too hot ; if it remains pale in colour the oven is too slow.

Pastry should be put in the hot part of the oven for the first five minutes, after which it should be removed to a cooler part that it may be cooked through. Large pies containing fruit or meat, which must be thoroughly cooked, should have a sheet of paper placed over them as soon as the pastry has risen, to prevent their acquiring a dark brown colour before the contents of the pie are done.

Pastry which is to be boiled is lighter when made with suet than it is when butter, lard, or dripping is used. Beef suet is generally used for this purpose, but mutton suet is more wholesome and can be chopped the more easily of the two. With one pound of flour, four, six, eight, or ten ounces of suet may be taken, according to the degree of richness required. Very good suet crust may be made with six ounces of suet, one teaspoonful of baking powder, a pinch of salt, and a pound of flour. The suet should be skinned, and the fibres and sinews should be removed, and it should then be chopped till it is as fine as oatmeal, and rubbed into the flour ; water should be added gradually. To make a very stiff paste the pastry should be rolled out once, and it is ready for use.

Making raised pies, that is, pies baked without either dishes or pattypans, is very interesting work, and like a good many other things it is very mysterious until we know how to do it, and very easy when we do. I will

try to describe the method of making these pies very clearly. If there are any girls who feel inclined to follow the instructions given, and make the attempt, I would advise them to begin by making small pies ; then when they have become quite proficient in the art, they may try their hand on large ones.

Raised pies may be made with every kind of meat, game, or poultry, provided only that whatever is used is free from bone. It must be remembered, therefore, that all meat must be boned before it is used for this purpose. The meat also must be pleasantly seasoned, and the gravy must be reduced until it will form a stiff jelly when cold. This strong gravy is put in after the pie has been taken from the oven, and it should, if possible, be made the day before it is wanted.

We will suppose, therefore, that we wish to make either one moderate sized pork pie, or two small ones. Take one pound of lean pork, one pound of flour, a quarter of a pound of lard, half a pint of cold water, six dried sage leaves, one egg, and a little pepper and salt. Weigh the flour, and put it into a bowl with a little salt ; put the lard and cold water into a saucepan, and set it on the fire until it is boiling hot. Pour the boiling liquor into the flour, and mix it with a wooden spoon till it is a firm smooth paste. It cannot, of course, be mixed with the fingers in the first instance, because it will be too hot.

Mix the sage leaves with a little pepper and salt on a plate. While the water and lard are heating, cut the meat into small neat pieces and set them aside till wanted

As soon as the paste is made we must be as expeditious as possible, because the pie is to be moulded while the paste is warm and soft. As it gets cold it will become hard, and then we cannot shape it as we wish. First we cut off one-fourth of the quantity of paste (that is, if we are going to make one moderate sized pie), put it on a plate, and set it over a saucepan of hot water to keep it soft ; it is intended for the lid of the pie. We then take the remainder of the paste, form it with both hands to an oval lump, and lay it on the table. We keep pressing the centre of the lump with the knuckles of the right hand to make a hollow ; we put the thumb of the right hand inside the hole thus formed, whilst keeping the four

fingers outside it, and with the help of the left hand we work the shape round and round till we have a firm thin wall to the pie with a solid foundation. We shall find that the walls will show a tendency to grow wider than the bottom, and incline outwards. This cannot be allowed, they must incline *inwards;* and so if they get wide they must be doubled over and then pressed smooth, just as children double over part of a seam when they are in danger of "puckering" it. When we acquire skill in our work there will be no fear of our thus "puckering" our pork pie, and so we shall not need to fold it over; but while we are learners we must do our best, and leave the rest.

Another mistake into which we shall be likely to fall will be that of making our walls or sides thinner in some places than in others. This also must not be allowed. When the pie is filled and is in the oven, these thin places will, if left, burst through, and the pie will be spoilt. Care must be taken, therefore, to make the walls of an even thickness all round; and if any portion should inadvertently become thin and weak, we must either double it over and make it thick again, as in the former case, or lay a little patch of pastry inside it to strengthen it.

Girls will see now how necessary it is to be quick in this business. The paste is soft when we begin to work upon it, but every minute it is getting harder. If it were to get quite hard we should have to put it on a plate over hot water to soften it again, and then it would not be so good as when freshly made.

When the pie is shaped we fill it to within half an inch of the top with the pieces of meat, first dipping each one into cold water and afterwards rolling it in the seasoning which was mixed ready for us a little while ago on the plate. We then roll out the piece of paste which was set apart for the cover to the proper shape and size, and lay it over the meat; egg the edges, and press them securely together, and make a hole in the centre of the pie through which the gravy can be poured when the pie is baked. All that now remains to be done is to ornament our work, *brush* it all over with beaten egg, and bake it in a moderate oven, then pour the gravy into it. The ornamentation must be left to taste. The pie will look very pretty if

leaves of pastry are laid all round the outside, and if the rim at the top is notched finely and evenly with scissors. I once saw a pie made to look very pretty by placing what the artist called "wheatsheaves" (that is, strips of pastry rolled up, then cut finely at one end to make them look something like wheatsheaves) at regular intervals, with leaves of pastry between. Of course these ornaments had to be fastened firmly to the pie with white of egg.

Raised pies must be baked in a moderate oven, because they are solid, and have to be cooked throughout. A pie such as I have described would need to bake from two to three hours; a large pie would require from four to five hours. Sometimes these raised pies are made in a mould, then the bottom is rolled and laid in the tin; the sides are put on separately, the edges being fastened together with white of egg, and the lid is laid on and fastened in the same way. These moulds are not, however, to be found in every kitchen, and it is a very good thing when we are able to dispense with them.

Girls who wish to become adepts in the art of making pastry, must always remember that the most perfect theories are of little use without practice. Practice alone will enable us to make good pastry. We may measure quantities and observe rules with the utmost precision, but until we have had practice we shall creep painfully along, instead of marching bravely forward with our pies in our hands.

XI.

SOUPS, AND HOW TO MAKE THEM.

It is astonishing what a prejudice ordinary people have against soup. The objection is not so universal as it was a few years ago, but still it exists. I cannot but think that one reason of this is that the housekeepers who scorn it do not understand what soup really is. A friend of mine once told me that none of her girls would touch soup; they did not care for it at all. I was not astonished at this when I discovered that her only idea

of making soup was to thicken the liquor in which meat had been boiled with prepared pea-meal. Another lady, who sympathised with the first one in her want of appreciation of culinary delicacies, used to make it by thickening the liquor with oatmeal. On one occasion I was privileged to taste the latter preparation. I expected it would be insipid, but it was not; it was particularly tasty, for it was burnt. I sympathised with the young ladies who did not like it at all, for I decided that I could not have eaten much of that soup if I had been paid for it.

One erroneous idea concerning soup is that it is expensive, and that in order to make it good pounds upon pounds of meat must be obtained for it. If these are dispensed with the soup will not be worth drinking. Really, however, soup is an economy. It is a mistake to make it very rich and very strong. When, as is generally the case, it is succeeded by other dishes, it should be light and pleasantly flavoured, but not strong or nourishing enough to furnish a dinner in itself. People usually sit down to dinner tired, hungry, and weary, and it is rather too much of a good thing to put a slice of roast beef or boiled mutton before them straight away. It is giving their digestive organs too much to do; they need to be set gently to work; to have light employment given them at first, and to be allowed to go on gradually to the heavy business. Sir Henry Thompson, I think it was, pointed out a little while ago, in some papers he published on food, that light liquid food was most valuable as a restorative. Those who have been accustomed to take soup, and have noticed how quickly it takes away the feeling of exhaustion, and prepares the way for enjoyment of dinner, would be very sorry to do without it. At the same time, they would be equally sorry to make it very strong and rich, unless they intended the family to dine upon it entirely.

When I said soup was an economy, I meant that it might be made the means of preventing waste; also that when used regularly it saves the joint, and partially satisfies the appetite before the most expensive part of the dinner is touched. I dare say you have heard of the housekeeper who said to her friend, "We never have soup; we cannot afford it;" to which the other replied, "Indeed,

we always have soup ; we cannot afford to do without it." I certainly think the second housekeeper was the more economical of the two.

However, it is not my business now to sing the praises of soup. But I may say that I believe it would be seen on our tables more frequently than it is if the girls in a house were able and willing to make it. The secret of our not having soup is that it takes time and trouble, which servants do not always care to give. But in the good time coming, when all the girls in our homes understand and practise cookery, when our daughters would rather prepare with their own hands a good dinner for their fathers, than tire their eyes in making so many useless mats and antimacassars, things will be quite different ; we shall enter upon a delightful period, and we shall all live twice as well as we do now, at half the present cost.

There are three varieties of soup—clear soup, thick soup, and purées. For all these stock is required, and therefore the first thing we have to do is to learn how to make stock. For very nourishing, superior soup, and for clear soup, fresh meat is required ; although it is quite true that clear soup *may* be made of weak bone stock, it is scarcely worth while to do so unless there was plenty of fresh meat left on the bones, and to buy bones roughly trimmed would cost as much as to buy fresh meat. Ordinary stock, however, that will make excellent soup for daily use may be made of the trimmings of joints, the liquor in which meat and vegetables and fish have been boiled, and even of the bones, skin, and trimmings left after a joint has been served. For nothing of this kind should be thrown away until it has been stewed until every particle of goodness has been extracted from it.

I am quite prepared to hear that girls who tried to prevent waste in this way, and to make the most of things by stewing bones and trimmings for stock, would be laughed and sneered at by certain people. Let them never mind this. When we are doing right we can bear to be laughed at, and certainly we who try to be economical are in the right. It is wicked to waste good food while so many thousands are needing it. If we have more than we require let us give to those who want, not throw

away. It is a great disgrace to English cooks that they act as though extravagance meant cleverness, and thrift meant incompetency. I have noticed again and again that as soon as ever a cook acquires skill she loses her respect for quantities and prices. We will not do this in our cookery class, for we all look upon waste as sin.

Therefore, let us resolve that nothing containing nourishment shall be thrown away until it has been well stewed. We will put on one side all the trimmings, skin, bone, and fat that we can collect, and as soon as we have an opportunity we will render down the fat for frying, and will stew the rest for stock.

Sometimes economical cooks advise that a stock-pot should be kept by the side of the fire, and that trimmings, pieces, and scraps should be thrown into it from time to time as they come to hand; that water should be added when necessary, and thus a constant supply of stock should be provided. This plan I do not recommend. In the first place it leads to the ingredients being unequally cooked. Scraps which are thrown into the pot when the cooking is half through are not so thoroughly stewed as those which were in at the beginning. In the second place over-long simmering will spoil the flavour of our stock, and make it taste unpleasantly of the pan. Whatever we have to stew should be put on freshly into a clean pan every morning; when the simmering has been continued five hours the contents of the pan should be turned into an earthen vessel, and carried into a cool larder and left uncovered till wanted.

We will suppose that we have a quantity of bones and trimming, say, for instance, the bones left from a cooked joint which weighed eight or ten pounds before it wa scut. Perhaps also we may find that we have the bones of poultry or game, and two or three bacon bones; if so, we should of course make use of them although we should do very well without them. How should we proceed in making stock?

We should look very carefully over our ingredients, and trim away anything that was unsuitable for our purpose. If it should happen that there was anything not quite pure and sweet we should put that aside at once. "Cleanliness is the soul of cookery," and it is particularly

called for in economical cookery. We wish to avoid waste, but we are not willing to use everything. Having satisfied ourselves on this point, however, we put the bones into a perfectly clean saucepan and pour over them cold water, in the proportion of a quart of water to a pound of bones. I dare say it will be remembered that when we were speaking of boiling meat we said that when we wanted to keep the goodness in the meat we placed it in boiling water ; when we wished to draw the goodness out we put it in cold water. On this occasion we wish to draw the goodness out, we therefore use cold water.

We now put the saucepan on the fire, and bring the liquid slowly to a boil. In a little while it will begin to simmer, and then we throw in a small quantity of salt, not as much as will be needed to season the soup, but a little to help the scum to rise. It is well to leave the seasoning until the stock is made, because we intend to boil the liquid down to about half its quantity, and if we add as much salt as is wanted now we shall find that our stock is too salt by the time the boiling is over, for salt will not fly away in steam, though water may. But salt will help to make the scum rise, and we particularly wish to remove the scum as soon as it appears, before it has time to boil down into stock again. Therefore we throw a little salt in, and for the same purpose we add a cupful of cold water two or three times after skimming, and after each addition heat again and skim once more.

When we have cleared away as much scum as possible we draw the saucepan back, put on the lid, and let the liquor simmer very gently for five hours. If we wish to use it quickly, or if the weather is cold, we may at the end of three hours, put in the flavouring ingredients, a carrot, a leek, or an onion, a clove, a little celery, a bay leaf, a bunch of parsley, a sprig of thyme, six peppercorns, and half a blade of mace for each quart of liquid. We must remember, however, that if the weather is warm, stock will keep better if vegetables have not been boiled in it, and that even if they are so boiled, additional vegetables will have to be added when the stock is used in order to "revive the flavour ;" otherwise our soup will not taste fresh.

Bone stock boiled without either vegetables or seasoning

will not taste at all good when the five hours are over, and it is poured out, and carried into the larder. Nevertheless, it will contain goodness, and we can make excellent soup when the time arrives for us to do so.

Perhaps the bones do not appear to be sufficiently stewed after the liquor is strained from them. They ought to look quite clear and clean, and in such a condition that when dry we should have no objection to put them into our pockets. If this be so, we may stew them again next day with a small quantity of fresh cold water, but we must on no account be persuaded to leave them in the saucepan all night.

When we want to make superior stock we take fresh meat. If we wanted three pints of stock we should need three pounds of meat—shin of beef for brown stock, knuckle of veal for white stock—and we must allow a pint of water to a pound of meat, and one pint of water over. The meat is to be cut into small pieces, the smaller the better, and covered with the cold water, then salted, boiled up, skimmed and simmered exactly as recommended for bone soup. The vegetables, a carrot, half a turnip, a leek, a bunch of parsley, a sprig of thyme, a bay leaf, three or four sticks of celery, and twenty peppercorns, will be sufficient for three pints of stock.

In both these instances the liquor in which meat had been boiled, and especially the liquor in which "rabbit" or "chicken" or even rabbit bones or chicken bones had been stewed, would be much to be preferred to water if it could be had. If fresh meat were used, any trimmings of meat or poultry that there might be should be thrown into the pan and stewed with the meat; they would make the stock stronger.

There is still another kind of stock which may be needed, and that is fish stock for fish soup. It may be made with the liquor in which fish has been boiled, and the bones and skin of the fish with an anchovy, an onion, and one or two cloves may be stewed in it afterwards. Fish soup should be carefully skimmed, and it must be remembered that it will not keep so well as meat stock.

We now have our stock, which is the basis of soup, ready. The process of converting it into soup must be reserved for another lesson.

XII.

CLEAR SOUPS.

HAVING prepared our stock, strained it over-night, and left it in an uncovered vessel in a cool larder, the next question we have to ask ourselves is, "What shall we do with it?"

There is no room for doubt here, no matter how we may proceed afterwards. The first thing to be done is to clear away the fat, which will have settled in a cake on the top of the stock. If the stock is a jelly, we may take this off more easily if we use a metal spoon which has first been dipped into hot water; and after we have taken off as much fat as we can in this way, we must wipe the jelly and the basin with the corner of a napkin which has been wrung out of hot water.

It is said that people learned in cookery know of five hundred different kinds of soup. If this be true, it is probable that a large proportion of these soups are so much like each other that ordinary people could not discover the points of difference between them. It is also probable that a goodly number are made of clear soup. Besides, cooks who can make good clear soup can make all kinds of soup; and therefore we will begin our lesson now by describing the process of clarification.

Soup is sometimes made clear with white of egg, and sometimes with raw lean meat, beef, or veal, the medium in each case being the same—albumen.

I dare say you remember that when we were talking about boiling meat we said that we put meat which was to be eaten into boiling water for two or three minutes, in order that the albumen might harden on the outside and form a sort of shield to keep in the goodness of the meat. When we boil the raw meat in the stock the albumen hardens as before, but being mixed with the liquid it takes the impurities contained there with it, and all are collected in a mass together, and can be strained away.

We must not suppose, however, that it makes no difference whether we use white of eggs or lean meat in clarifying soup. Lean meat enriches soup, white of egg

impoverishes it ; and it is more profitable to clarify weak stock with lean meat than it is to clarify strong stock with white of egg.

As to the quantity of meat to be used for clarification, that must depend on the weight of meat employed in making the stock, not upon the measure of liquor which we have at our disposal. The proportion of meat needed for clarification is half a pound of lean meat for every two and a half pounds of meat used in making the stock, and the quantity of lean meat needed would be no less if in making stock we had used half a pint only of water to the pound of meat. Indeed, if the liquid were very strong we should find it an advantage to mix about a teaspoonful of white of egg with the raw meat, because strong liquids are more difficult to clarify than thin ones.

We will, therefore, suppose that we have stock made with two pounds and a half of meat, and that we are going to clarify it with half a pound of lean meat freed entirely from fat and skin. How should we proceed?

We must first cut the meat into very small pieces (if we have such a thing, we may pass it through the sausage machine instead), and put with it a carrot, a turnip, and the white part of a good-sized leek, or, wanting this, an onion, but a leek is much the more delicate in flavour of the two. Of course, we must wash the vegetables, scrape the carrot, and cut the turnip and the leek into small pieces. We may add also a stick of celery, half a bay leaf, a sprig of thyme and parsley, and half a dozen peppercorns.

We now pour the stock, already freed from fat, very steadily into a perfectly clean saucepan, being careful always not to disturb and also to leave behind any sediment there may be at the bottom of the vessel. We put the saucepan on a quick fire, stir the chopped meat and the flavouring ingredients into it, and keep stirring until a froth begins to form on the liquor. We then stop stirring at once, wait until the liquor rises high, draw the pan back instantly, and let it stand at the side of the fire for a quarter of an hour or so.

If we now take a little of the liquid in a silver spoon we shall find that part of it is bright and clear, and we can see the silver through it ; the other is a sort of curd, mixed with vegetables and meat. This curd is the albumen which

has hardened and gathered the impurities which were in the soup with it, and this it is which must be removed by straining.

Whilst the liquor is standing by the side of the fire we may prepare the strainer. A jelly bag is not the best thing we can take, because we want to pour the liquid in gently, and it is awkward to do this with a deep jelly bag. Better to take the thick flannel of which the jelly bag would have been made, wring it out of boiling water, and tie it to the four legs of a chair which has been turned upside down on a table. The vessel for the soup can be placed underneath the flannel, and the liquor can be poured on slowly and gently so as not to disturb the scum, which will serve as a filter for the soup. Now, if my directions have been followed exactly I am quite sure that a beautifully bright, clear soup will be obtained, and one that will taste pleasantly also when it has been boiled up again with salt and a small piece of sugar.

Perhaps girls feel inclined to ask, Must the flavouring ingredients be put into stock which has already been flavoured when it was made? Yes, they must. The quantities here given are for flavoured stock. If the stock were not flavoured at all, a larger proportion of vegetables would be needed. One secret of having well-tasting soup is to let it be freshly flavoured. The vegetables are put in here to revive the flavour, and the flavour needs reviving after the stock has been all night in the larder. Otherwise the soup will have a stale taste, which will be anything but agreeable.

I may say in passing that it is this necessity for reviving the flavours which makes the difficulty with tinned soups. People often say that tinned soups taste of the tin, or, in other words, the flavour is stale. If they would take the trouble to boil a few fresh flavourers with a small quantity of fresh stock, and add this either strained, or, in the case of *purées*, rubbed through a sieve, to the soup which is in the tin, they would find that the tinned taste was scarcely perceptible.

One point must be carefully noted in clearing soup, and that is, the cook must stop whisking *instantly* when the scum begins to rise; also, the pan must be drawn back as soon as the liquor bubbles. If the liquor is whisked

too long, or boiled too long, the scum may sink down again, and the soup will be spoiled.

Another point to be noted is that the soup must not be clarified before the day on which it is wanted, or it will become cloudy with standing.

It is astonishing what a number of soups may be made of this clear soup. Sago, rice, macaroni, *vermicelli nouilles*, pearl barley, tapioca, and semolina may all be boiled separately, then dropped into it, and the soup will then be called after the name of the distinctive ingredient. When spring vegetables, young turnips, carrots, or leeks are put into clear soup it becomes *printanière*, or spring soup. When these same vegetables are softly stewed in butter and cut into shreds it is *julienne*. When savoury custard (cut into diamonds or stars) is put into it, it is *soup royale*. If Brussel sprouts are introduced it is Flemish soup; if crusts of bread, it is *crôute au pot;* if homely vegetables, it is *soup à la paysanne;* if poached eggs, it is Colbert's soup. And so we might go on: *jardinière*, *brunoise*, *chiffonade*, *macédoine*, *nivernaise*, and others are all clear soup, with very slight differences.

If there are any girls belonging to this class who try to follow my instructions, and make some clear soup in the way I have described, I know quite well what the result will be. The soup will be excellent, bright, clear, and good, but they will feel that it has been a great trouble to make. I should not be surprised if their state of mind were similar to that of the charity-boy mentioned in *Pickwick*, who, when he got to the end of the alphabet, said, "Whether it is worth while going through so much to learn so little is a matter of taste. *I* think it isn't." After all, important as cookery may be, there are other things to be done in the world; and though we might be willing to make the best clear soup for high days and holidays, it is more than probable that few would be able to give the time to it very often. Therefore, it will be an advantage to learn an easier and cheaper way of preparing it, so as to achieve very nearly, though not quite, as satisfactory a result.

The easier method is to use stock made of Liebig's Extract of Meat, instead of stock from fresh meat. A small quantity of this extract dissolved in a little boiling

water will supply a clear straw-coloured liquor, which tastes quite sufficiently of meat, and which may easily be converted into excellent soup. Of course the difficulty here is the flavouring. We must so flavour this extract of meat stock that no one shall know what it was, but shall if they think anything at all about the matter, regard it as a matter of course that the stock for the soup was made in the usual way, "with trouble and charges," to use an expression of Izaak Walton's.

Whatever vegetables are used in flavouring this soup must be cleansed thoroughly and boiled separately. A little soaked gelatine may be boiled in the liquid, which must be skimmed thoroughly ; and as soon as it tastes pleasantly, and before the vegetables are soft, the liquid must be strained off for use.

As to what flavourers we are to use in making the stock, the question must be answered by another—What flavourers can we get at the time? We need not always make our soup exactly alike. When we once get the idea we can vary the flavour according to the ingredients at our command. Supposing we want a small quantity of soup for a small family, let us flavour a pint of water pleasantly and rather strongly by boiling in it the white part of a leek, six or eight fresh peppercorns, and a stick of celery, or a small pinch of celery seed tied in muslin ; a turnip, a small carrot, and a little parsley can be added, if liked, or an onion with one or two cloves may be used instead of the leek.

We must cleanse and prepare the vegetables before using. Also we must remove the scum from the liquid as it rises, and boil in it about a teaspoonful of good gelatine which has been soaked in water for a while ; then we dissolve a small quantity of extract of meat in fresh boiling water (I cannot say exactly how much, because extract of meat varies in quality—about a teaspoonful), strain the stock in which the vegetables were boiled, mix the two together, and add salt until the liquid is coloured sufficiently and tastes well. It should not be over brown, and it should not taste specially of the dissolved extract, but rather of a combination of meat and vegetables. When wanted make it hot, and the soup is ready. When they are to be had, a handful of green peas or a little carrot

and turnip finely shred and boiled separately are a great addition to this soup. A tablespoonful of crushed tapioca may be simmered in it till clear, to make a change, or it may be thickened with arrowroot. Perhaps girls feel inclined to say, "What a small quantity you have made; there will not be enough!" Quite enough for a small family—that is, for four or five people. One reason why English people do not like soup is, that when they make it at all, they make it in such large quantities that they get tired of it before it is finished. They have an idea that if they make soup at all they must make a gallon. A gallon of soup! why, it would be enough for twenty people. If four persons were compelled to drink it day after day until it was finished, they would ever afterwards say they did not like soup. Let me advise girls to make a quart of soup to begin with, and if it is liked they can make a quart of another kind another day.

Fresh herbs are excellent for flavouring soup; tarragon leaves especially impart a delicious and quite unique flavour, although it is with tarragon as with celery-seed—a very little goes a long way. Shalots and leeks are always to be preferred to onions when they can be obtained; they are more delicate in flavour. A ham bone is a perfect treasure for flavouring, but if we use it we must clarify the soup with a little lean meat or a teaspoonful of white of egg. Mushroom ketchup and prepared sauces, too, are valuable helps for flavouring soups when used very sparingly, but a soup ought not to taste of mushroom ketchup above everything. There is still another way of making clear soup, and that is by boiling broth to a glaze, adding water, and simmering gently. I fear, however, that space will not allow me to describe this now, besides which it is a little difficult for amateurs. I must, therefore, advise girls to try the plans we have been speaking of. In our next lesson we will try to make thick soups and *purées*.

XIII.

THICK SOUPS AND PURÉES.

THICK soup is stock made thick—that is, about as thick as cream—by the addition of some starchy ingredient, which can be boiled with the liquor, and, as it were, enter into its composition. The materials usually employed for the purpose are flour, arrowroot, ground rice, corn flour, oatmeal, potato flour, sago, tapioca, and eggs. The stock should first be pleasantly flavoured and seasoned, and made free from fat, and the thickening ingredient should be added a little time before the soup is required, so that the "liaison," as it is called, or "thickening," may have time to cook sufficiently, but not over much; for it must be remembered that if the soup and thickening are boiled too long, the soup will become thicker and thicker, and may burn.

When arrowroot, flour, or similar materials are employed for thickening soups, the ingredient should first be measured (half an ounce of thickening to a pint of soup is a usual allowance), put into a basin mixed with a small quantity of cold liquid, stock or water, then beaten well with the back of a wooden spoon, till it forms a smooth thin paste. When this point is reached, add the hot stock gradually off the fire, to prevent lumping, put the soup back into the stewpan, stir it till it boils, simmer for a few minutes, till the soup is smooth and thick, when it is ready to be served.

Soup is very often thickened with brown roux—that is, a mixture of flour and butter browned over the fire. The advantage of using this preparation is that it colours the soup as well as thickens it. It is, however, liable to destroy the flavour of the soup, and there is really no occasion to use it, because soup can be coloured without it, by frying the meat and vegetables used in making it, particularly the onions, till they are brown without being at all burnt. A good cook is very careful about the appearance of her soup. If white, it should be white, not grey; if brown, it should be brown, not drab. Brown soup which looks pale as if it were diseased will never be

enjoyed thoroughly, no matter how good it may taste. When brown roux is used, the soup must be simmered by the side of the fire for a while, and the fat must be skimmed off as it rises.

A little caramel, ketchup, or a little strong brown gravy or Liebig's extract may be added to the soup when it is about to be served if further colouring is required. Pastilles Carpentier also, which consist of small round balls like marbles, are to be bought at most grocers. They are specially made for colouring soup, are excellent for the purpose, and very cheap. All colouring ingredients, however, and especially caramel or ketchup, must be introduced very sparingly; they must on no account be added in such quantities that they can be tasted. A soup that tastes of ketchup or burnt sugar is a failure, no matter how rich and brown it may look. Nevertheless it is a convenience to have materials of this kind at hand, because a small quantity will often impart the desired colour without exciting a suspicion of its cause. Caramel is easily made. Four ounces of moist sugar are put into an old saucepan and boiled until it is of a light brown colour. It is then stirred until it is very dark, without being burnt, when half a pint of boiling water is boiled with it for five minutes to dissolve it; it may then be strained into a bottle, and put aside till wanted. Caramel thus prepared beforehand is very much to be preferred to the rough-and-ready browning used by cooks every day, and made by burning sugar in an iron spoon. The latter preparation is almost certain to spoil the flavour of a dish into which it enters. The former, if used very carefully indeed, may improve the look of a soup without injuring its taste. Yet even this is a dangerous addition, and should be dispensed with if possible.

Purées differ from thick soups in that the vegetables used in flavouring the liquor, or the materials used for thickening, are rubbed patiently through a sieve; then mixed with the liquor once more, and boiled up again before serving. In purées nothing is wasted; you get the full benefit of everything used in making the soup. Yet it is to be feared that purées will never be very popular with people who have to do their own cooking, because this process of rubbing vegetables through a

sieve is rather troublesome, and calls both for time and patience. If these can be given, however, the result is sure to be satisfactory; and if girls who have till now been accustomed only to the ordinary method of cookery usually carried on in English kitchens will follow the directions given, and patiently make a purée properly, they will be astonished to find what excellent soup can be made for a trifling cost.

The best of it is that a girl who gets the idea of making one purée can make every purée. Therefore, as potatoes are within the reach of all I will describe the process of making potato purée, and I hope girls will remember that although potatoes are used here, the process would be the same whatever vegetables were used, and whatever the purée might be.

Before we began to make our soup, however, we should want a hair sieve, and a small one can be bought for about ninepence. If we determined to make soup every day, we should do well to get a wire sieve; and a moderate-sized tin wire sieve would cost about half-a-crown, though a brass wire sieve would cost about four shillings. The vegetables could be made to go through the wire sieve more quickly than through the hair sieve, but the purée would not be quite so smooth in the former case as in the latter. At the same time the wire sieve would last much longer than the hair sieve.

Besides the hair sieve we must procure a stewpan with a closely-fitting lid, one leek, or if this is not to be had, one small onion, a pound of potatoes, weighed after being washed and peeled, half of a small stick of celery, and a pint and a half of stock. We wash the leek and cut the white part only into dice; then put these, the potatoes thinly sliced, the celery, and four peppercorns into the stewpan with one ounce of butter. We cover the stewpan closely and place it on the fire for five minutes to "sweat" the vegetables, and we shake the pan now and then to keep the potatoes from sticking and thus acquiring colour. After being steamed in butter in this way vegetables intended for soup give out their flavour better than they would if boiled at once in the stock.

We now pour the pint and a half of white stock over

the vegetables, and boil them till they are quite tender. We have a bowl ready, and place the sieve with the deep end downwards (because we shall more easily rub the potatoes at the shallow end) inside the bowl, then pour the contents of the stewpan, liquor, potatoes, leeks, and all through the sieve. Of course the liquid part will at once go through the sieve, and we may put a portion of this back into the stewpan to keep hot because we shall want it to moisten the pulp. The vegetables we rub with the back of a wooden spoon until they pass through the sieve and drop into the liquor in the bowl. Every two or three minutes we may lift up the sieve and scrape the pulp which will be lying thickly on the under part, for by doing this we shall make it easier for the pulp to go through the sieve ; and, by way of still further facilitating matters, we may every now and then moisten the pulp with the hot liquor we kept for the purpose.

Thus far we may prepare the soup some time before it is wanted. About half an hour before it is to be served we put it on the fire in a clean stewpan, and stir it till it boils. We add salt to season it pleasantly. Make a quarter of a pint of cream hot (or milk, if cream is not to be had), in a separate saucepan, and mix this with the soup at the last moment. And now our soup is ready, though, for the sake of appearance, we shall do well to have a teaspoonful of parsley leaves, or of chervil leaves, finely minced, and to sprinkle these into the soup before sending it to the dining-room.

The quantity of soup thus made will be enough for five or six persons. We may calculate that the stock cost nothing, because the liquor in which a rabbit, a chicken, or a piece of mutton has been boiled will answer excellently for it ; and apart from the stock the soup will have cost 10d., that is—potatoes, 1d. ; leek, 1d. ; butter, 1½d. ; celery, ¼d. ; parsley, ¼d. ; and cream, 6d. ; and the result will be a delicious superior soup, such as is rarely met with in English homes.

Having mastered this one recipe, we may vary it to any extent—carrots, turnips, vegetable marrows, Jerusalem artichokes, asparagus, celery, red and white haricot beans, tomatoes, chestnuts, peas, green peas, and lentils, may all be made into soup in the same way, though in each

case there will be slight variations, which a girl may easily acquaint herself with. There will, however, be no variation in this, that if she wishes to make a purée she must pass the ingredients through a sieve.

Sometimes soups and purées are made without any stock made from meat, and then they are called *maigre* soups. If milk is added to *maigre* soups they are quite sufficiently nourishing; for, as I said when first we spoke of soups, it is not usually required that soups should furnish strong nourishment so much as that they should supply light, easily-digested food, suitable for the commencement of a repast. *Maigre* soups made of peas, beans, and lentils, are, however, as nourishing as soup made of good meat stock.

I have no doubt that if any professed cooks read what I have written, they will say, "Here is nothing new; everyone knows this." I think they are mistaken; everyone does not know it. Those only understand it who have made cookery a study, and who can speak its language. In every business there are details which are matters of course to the initiated, but which are quite unknown to outsiders. There are hundreds of girls who, if they heard a cook say, "Pass the pulp through a sieve," either would not know what was meant, or else would think the process very unnecessary. It is to such as these that I address myself. Now I think I have explained the process with tolerable clearness, and I hope the girls belonging to the class will carry out my instructions for themselves. If they do so I feel sure they will be gratified.

XIV.

HOW TO COOK VEGETABLES.

A RECENT very clever writer on cookery—I mean the late M. Kettner—has said that "there are no finer vegetables to be found anywhere than in England, and the English do not know how to eat them. The weak point of an English dinner is always the vegetables."

Now there are a great many places in England where it is difficult to get good meat at a reasonable price. If meat is plentiful, perhaps fish, game, and poultry are not to be had, but vegetables of one kind or another are everywhere. Therefore, it would be very easy for us to try to improve ourselves in this, our "weak point," and we shall find it to our advantage to give a little attention to the vegetables.

The most usual way of cooking vegetables is to boil them. This usual way is a very good way if it is properly done, but when it is mismanaged the effect is deplorable. The process, too, is not exactly the same for every vegetable, and if we wish to boil vegetables properly, we ought to understand both general rules and particular exceptions. Before, however, we can speak of any process whatever, we must understand how to prepare and cleanse vegetables for boiling. This is a very important matter, for cleanliness can scarcely be too strongly insisted upon. Caterpillars and slugs subsist on vegetables, and what can be more disagreeable than to find a caterpillar on our plates when we are half through a meal? We will therefore recall to mind the mode of cleaning and preparing vegetables in constant use.

Cabbages, Brussels sprouts, kale, and greens.—Wash well in salt and water; look over carefully, especially behind the leaves, for fear of insects. The stalks and the loose decayed, discoloured leaves should be removed, and the vegetables neatly trimmed. For safety's sake they should be laid for about half an hour in plenty of cold water to which salt has been added in the proportion of a dessertspoonful of salt to a quart of water. An effectual means of dislodging insects is to put vinegar in the water instead of salt. Cabbages should be cut in halves for cleansing, then tied together again when boiled.

Cauliflowers.—Trim away the superfluous leaves, remove those which remain, and trim them neatly to make the vegetable as round and compact as possible. Cauliflowers should be washed in salt and water, and should be placed, head downwards, in either salt and water or vinegar and water for an hour, being well shaken once

or twice during this time. The stalk of the cauliflower should be cut across twice transversely, and the flower should be put into the saucepan head downwards.

Potatoes.—Wash in two or three waters and brush well before paring. In Ireland potatoes are both cooked and served in their skins, but this plan is not a popular one with English cooks. After being thoroughly cleansed, peel old potatoes thinly with a sharp knife and remove the specks and eyes. When potatoes are a bad colour it is generally due to their having been peeled without having been previously well washed and scrubbed. New potatoes should be well washed, then either rubbed with a towel or scraped with a sharp knife.

Carrots.—Wash and brush well, then scrape as thinly as possible with a knife, from the head downwards. If small they may be boiled whole. If large they may be either cut into quarters or cut fancy shapes.

Turnips.—Wash and brush well, then peel thickly till you reach a line which is a little way below the skin. Cut them up if too large.

French beans.—Break off the end and tear the strings from each side of the pod. Cut the beans slanting into two or three pieces.

French or globe artichokes.—Carefully wash these, and with a pair of scissors cut off the points of the leaves. When elaborately cooked the choke, that is the hay-like substance which is at the heart of the vegetable, must be removed. This is not necessary for plain boiling.

Asparagus.—Choose heads of equal size. Scrape the stems slightly and throw them into cold water as they are done, but do not keep them in long. Cut the white ends evenly, and tie the asparagus into small bundles. Bind with tape.

Sea kale.—Wash and trim the roots. Bind in bundles.

Lettuce.—(See Salads.)

Spinach.—This is a very gritty vegetable. It needs to be washed in several waters, and should be lifted with

both hands out of one pan of water into another in order to leave the grit behind. When clean take the leaves, one at a time, double them together, and tear away the stalk and fibre from the middle of each leaf.

Celery.—Wash thoroughly, and cut away the root and the outer stalks.

Peas and Windsor beans.—Shell these a short time before they are wanted. They will lose both colour and flavour if shelled long before being cooked.

Dried vegetables, such as peas, haricot beans, and lentils, should be soaked over-night in cold water. Discoloured beans, or beans which float, should be thrown away. Vegetables after being prepared should be laid in cold water until they are to be boiled. It is, however, a mistake to leave them over long in water, as green vegetables especially would deteriorate in quality if soaked. They should be well drained before being cooked. Green vegetables after being trimmed and cleansed should be put into plenty of fast-boiling salted water, without soda, and should be kept boiling quickly, the lid off the pan, till done. The only exceptions to this rule of quick boiling being green peas, beans, asparagus, cauliflower, and brocoli. The reason why the exceptions are made is that quick boiling might break the skins of the peas and beans, the heads of the asparagus, and the flower of the cauliflower. Peas should not be put into salted water, a little sugar should be thrown into the water instead.

Spinach is an exception to the general rule of boiling in plenty of water. This vegetable has so much water in its composition that it only needs to cook in as much water as hangs about it after washing. It should be packed into a large empty saucepan, a little salt should be sprinkled over it, and it should then be allowed to boil quickly in its own juices till tender. It will fall considerably in boiling, indeed we may calculate that when boiled it will occupy only one-tenth of the space which was needed for it before boiling. When tender the water should be pressed from it till it is as dry as possible. It may then be chopped small, put into a stewpan with an ounce of butter and a little pepper and salt, and stirred over the

fire with a wooden spoon till hot. A superior method of serving it is to squeeze it in a cloth to free it from moisture, then rub it through a wire sieve and stir it over the fire with pepper, salt, butter, and a small quantity of cream.

Asparagus and sea kale are dished upon toast, in order that they may be drained perfectly. Melted butter may be poured over sea kale, but never over asparagus.

Potatoes should be one kind, and as nearly of one size as possible. Old potatoes are excellent steamed. If boiled they should be put into plenty of cold water, with a teaspoonful of salt to a quart of water. They should be cooked very slowly till they can be pierced to the centre with a skewer. The water should then be poured off carefully, the lid should be put on the pan, and it should be placed by the side of the fire to finish the cooking in the steam. In four or five minutes remove the lid to let the steam escape, and shake the pan gently once or twice to prevent the potatoes sticking. When dry they are done. Old potatoes are also excellent when baked in a well-heated oven. They should be turned occasionally, that they may be equally cooked. New potatoes should be put into boiling water salted, and boiled till the centre can be pierced with a fork or skewer. The water should then be drained off, a folded cloth be laid upon the potatoes, and the lid put upon the pan, which should then be placed by the side of the fire till the potatoes are dry.

New potatoes are very good with *maître d'hotel* sauce. This sauce is made as follows : Melt one ounce of butter in a small saucepan, and mix half-an-ounce of flour smoothly with it, add half-a-pint of cold water. Stir the sauce till it boils. Have ready a sprig of picked parsley, which has been washed, dried, and chopped finely. Stir this into the sauce just before it is wanted. Pour the sauce over the potatoes last thing and serve. This quantity of sauce will be sufficient for a tureenful of potatoes.

Vegetable marrows and celery should be cooked in boiling water. White sauce is generally poured over celery. Cooked celery is good for rheumatic persons.

Root vegetables—that is, carrots, turnips, parsnips,

Jerusalem artichokes, and onions—should be put into boiling water, and the lid should be left on the pan. Old artichokes should, however, be put into cold water. Onions may be rendered milder and more digestible by soaking them for half-an-hour in boiling water (in which a tiny piece of soda is sometimes dissolved) before cooking.

All vegetables after being cooked may be *sauté*, that is, tossed over the fire in a little butter before being sent to table. They will be improved by the process. *Sauté* potatoes are lightly browned in the butter.

Cauliflowers, broad beans, vegetable marrows, and similar vegetables are excellently served with *sauce Blanche*. This sauce is made as follows :—

Melt an ounce of butter, and stir into it three-quarters of an ounce of flour. Mix with a wooden spoon to form a smooth paste. The sauce will not oil if the flour and butter are well cooked. Stir in half-a-pint of cold water and boil, then mix in well, off the fire, the yolk of one egg. Three or four drops of lemon-juice may be added at the last moment or not.

Vegetables plainly boiled are generally eaten with meat, but vegetables form a delicious dish when eaten alone after the meat. French people have vegetables served by themselves constantly, and it would be a great improvement if English people would imitate their example in this respect. Asparagus, globe artichokes, green peas, French beans, cauliflowers, and tomatoes, may all be prepared to form most agreeable dishes, which would be sure to be appreciated if people would only try them.

Asparagus, cauliflower, and globe artichokes, served alone, may be boiled in the usual way, accompanied either by oiled butter, melted butter (to which a little cream and a few drops of lemon-juice have been added), or Dutch sauce. These sauces are made as follows :—

Oiled butter.—Melt a little fresh butter without browning it. Skim it well, let it stand a minute or two, then pour it away from the curd, which will settle to the bottom. Add a pinch of salt, and serve the clear oily part only. *Melted butter.*—Melt an ounce of butter and mix half-an-ounce of flour smoothly with it. Add half-a-pint of cold water, and stir the sauce till it boils. *Dutch sauce.*—Real Dutch sauce is thickened with yolk of egg

only. To make it, mix thoroughly in a plain jar the yolks of two eggs, two tablespoonfuls of boiling water, a little pepper and salt, and four ounces of fresh butter. Set the jar in a small saucepan half filled with cold water, and stir the contents of the jar over a moderate fire till the water in the saucepan boils; cool a minute, then add as much lemon-juice as will make the sauce pleasantly acid. The sauce should look like thick, smooth cream. Imitation Dutch sauce is made by using more water and thickening the sauce with a small quantity of flour. Sauce thus made, however, is not so delicate as sauce thickened with egg only. Sauces of this kind are expensive when more is made than is required, and no one thinks of putting a large portion of rich sauce upon his plate, so that rich sauce possesses that pleasing qualification—"a little goes a long way." Sauce made with half the quantities given above, and costing about sixpence, would be enough for a small bundle of asparagus.

Boiled artichokes are particularly delicious. The leaves are eaten with the fingers, though a fork is needed for the fleshy heart of the vegetable. The leaves are taken one at a time, and the broad thick part is dipped into the sauce, and this portion only is eaten.

French beans or haricots verts, as they are usually called, are when young most excellent served alone. They should be stringed but not cut up, boiled till quite tender, drained, then put into the stewpan, be sprinkled lightly with pepper, salt, and very little flour, then tossed over the fire for ten minutes, with not less than two ounces of butter to each pound of beans. Peas may be treated in the same way. A little sugar may be substituted for the flour with them. Both peas and beans are best when young and freshly gathered. These vegetables are as nourishing as meat.

Cauliflower is excellent prepared as follows: Boil a large cauliflower in the usual way. Drain it thoroughly, cut away the stalks, and put it on a dish. Melt half-an-ounce of butter in a small saucepan, mix an ounce of flour smoothly with it, and add a gill of cold water. Stir the sauce till it boils, then add half-a-gill of cream, a little pepper, salt, and cayenne, and one ounce of grated

Parmesan cheese. Lay the sauce over the cauliflower with a spoon, make it smooth, and sprinkle another ounce of cheese over the top. Brown before the fire, and serve hot. The remains of dressed cauliflower can be used for this dish.

People who like tomatoes are sure to enjoy them stuffed. To prepare these, make a little savoury forcemeat with whatever materials may be at hand, and flavour it, if possible, with mushrooms and lightly with shalot. Take a thin slice from the stalk end of some ripe but firm tomatoes, which should be of moderate and equal size, and scoop out from the centre the seeds and the watery part. Put in the forcemeat, and sprinkle brown raspings over the top. Place the tomatoes side by side in a deep dish which has a cover, and into which oil has been poured to the depth of a quarter of an inch. Place the cover over the tomatoes, and bake them in a sharp oven till they are cooked through. They should be basted every now and then. They will take about twenty minutes or more, according to their size and ripeness. They should be quickly cooked, however, and the forcemeat with which they are filled should be cooked before it is used. If more convenient the stuffed tomatoes may be simply baked. A little brown sauce may be served with them.

There are one or two fancy ways of frying potatoes which are always appreciated. I should like to speak of these before closing. First, fried potatoes. Take some large kidney potatoes, cut them into plugs about two inches long and half-an-inch thick; wash them and let them lie in water till wanted, and before cooking them drain them in a clean napkin to absorb the moisture. Have ready an iron stewpan half full of boiling fat. Put the potatoes into the frying basket, plunge these into the fat, draw the pan back a little, shake the basket now and again, and let the potatoes remain for about five minutes. By this time the fat will have gone off the boil. Take the potatoes out of the fat, therefore, and heat the fat again. When it boils once more put the potatoes in again, let them remain a minute or two and they are done. They should be salted, drained on kitchen paper, and served at once.

Potatoes soufflés, that is potatoes cut into slices and blown out like balloons, are cooked very much in the same way, but they are cut into slices the eighth of an inch thick. The fat for the second boiling should be very hot, 400 deg. When placed in it the potatoes will inflate and present a most appetising appearance. It is said, I know not with what truth, that this mode of cooking potatoes was discovered accidentally. A cook was frying his potatoes, and when they were almost finished he was called away. He lifted them out of the pan and returned as quickly as possible, but found that his fat was cool. He put it back on the fire and made it hot once more, and on plunging his potatoes into it, was surprised to find that they became inflated and acquired a balloon-like appearance. His new dish was highly appreciated, and all the cooks in the parish besieged him for his secret, but it was some time before the real truth came out.

XV.

HOW TO COOK FISH.

FISH is expensive, and it is unfortunate that it should be so. It requires no care or rearing; it abounds without any trouble of ours, and all we have to do is to catch it, cook it, and eat it. If ever any people in this world ought to have a good supply of fish it is we English folks who live in a tight little island with the sea all round us, and who have, moreover, learnt more than any other nation how to make the winds and waves obey us, and the sea yield its treasures to us. Yet we have been victimised in this matter, and have not been allowed to make the most of our advantages.

We hope, however, that things will soon be made right. People are beginning to see that they have been imposed upon, and fortunately they only need to be thoroughly convinced of an unpleasant fact of this kind in order to make them take steps to remedy the evil. They have gone a little way on the right road, and we trust they will go further, and, as we are looking forward

to the time when fish will be easily obtained by everybody, we must learn all about it in good time, so that we shall be able to make the most of it when we have it.

One reason why fish is valuable is that it furnishes food for the brain. In these days a great many people are overworked. It is quite a rare thing to meet with a person who does just as much work as is good for him, no more and no less ; for we live in an age of extremes, and have either to be out of patience with those about us, because they are idle and do not appreciate the dignity of work, or we are anxious about them because they work beyond their strength. Unfortunately, too, the overworkers are just the individuals who ought to take care of themselves ; they are fathers and bread-winners, who have anxieties and responsibilities which make them weary and old before their time.

Girls may not be able to remove care from those they love, but they can help them to bear it by taking pains to prepare food which will supply the strength which is so much needed.

Believe me, both energy and the power of endurance depend very much more upon the kind of food we eat than we have yet realised, and the sooner we acknowledge this the better.

The Rev. Charles Kingsley once wrote a poem, in which he said—

"Men must work, and women must weep."

Now I believe and hope that the majority of women would, instead of weeping, set to work and help when trouble came. Sympathy is not worth much unless it passes into action. Girls who would, when their fathers were overworked and ailing, content themselves with weeping instead of trying to restore them by placing good food before them—beef-tea, meat, or fish—would not be worth the salt with which they would have savoured the food if they had prepared it. Such girls would not, however, be likely to attend our cookery class, and therefore we need not trouble about them, but turn our attention to those who will act more reasonably.

We must not suppose, however, that all fish is equally

valuable from the point of view of nourishment. Fish which are of an oily nature, for example, such as salmon, herrings, and eels, are more nourishing than white fish, such as sole, turbot, plaice, etc. The latter, however, possess the advantage of being more digestible and less perishable than the oily kinds. Turbot or sole would not spoil so quickly as would herring, mackerel, or salmon.

One of the disadvantages connected with the use of fish is that it spoils so quickly, and it must be fresh and in good condition or it is worthless. It is very necessary, therefore, that the cook should know how to choose what is good in this direction. Here, as in so many other cases, a little experience is worth any amount of theory. The very best course which a girl could pursue to gain what was required would be to go every day to the fishmonger's, and select for herself the fish which was needed. We may tell her that fish should be plump for its size, that it should be in season, that its eyes should be bright, its gills bright red, its flesh firm ; but if she once came to understand what fresh fish looked and smelt like, she would need none of these hints, and could no more be induced to purchase a stale specimen of the finny tribe than she would buy a feather to trim her new bonnet which had been out in a shower of rain.

The fact is, that it is very easy to deceive a novice in marketing, and if a fishmonger choose he can generally do so with impunity. The gills should be bright red, not brown, we are told ; but that is delusive, for it is said that a bright colour is often imparted artificially. The eyes should be full and bright ; but what is a bright eye when there are scores of fish to choose from ? A girl becomes confused and is scarcely able to distinguish between slight degrees of variation. True, the smell of fish is an unmistakeable test of its quality, but to try even this requires experience. Yet one sign of freshness may be given which even a novice may discern—that is, the stiffness of the fish. If ever you see a fish lying on the slab which looks as if it were cut out in marble, and in which the tail stands out firmly, instead of hanging down, you will be sure to find the fishmonger in a jubilant state of mind, and when you speak to him he will tell you his

fish is not fresh only, it is all but alive. Flabbiness is a sure sign of staleness or of the fish being out of season, and fish in this condition is not only worthless, but may be injurious.

The most popular way of cooking large fish is to boil it. It is so usual to put fish into cold water and bring it gently to the boil, that I daresay you will be astonished when I say that in my opinion, and that of a great many people who know very much more about cookery than I do, the same rule should be followed in boiling fish that is observed in boiling meat, and for the same reason. I hope you remember that when we were talking of boiling meat we said that meat was first put into boiling water to harden the surface, and so keep in the goodness; afterwards it was to be drawn back and simmered gently till tender. Salt meat, on the other hand, was to be put into tepid water, or, if very salt, into cold water, in order to draw out a little of the salt, which might harden the meat.

Now, we wish to keep the goodness in fish as in meat, and therefore we put it into boiling water. But as fish is more delicate than meat, we must be careful to put it into the boiling water very carefully, and then to draw it back immediately and keep it below boiling point until it is cooked. We ought to put a good handful of salt or a little vinegar into the water with it, as that will help to harden the outside quickly, but if we allow the water in the pan with the fish to boil quickly, our fish will be spoilt.

The only exception to this rule of putting fresh fish into boiling water occurs in the case of mackerel. The skin of this fish is so tender that if put into boiling water it would break. It is therefore put into tepid water, and must not be brought to the boil.

It is not possible to say how long fish must be boiled, because that must be determined by the thickness and, if I may use the word, the texture of the flesh, as well as its weight. It will vary from six to fifteen minutes per pound. We may know when it is done by pushing a skewer through the thickest part of the fish; if it goes through quite easily, and the flesh feels soft, it is done, and should be taken up immediately, for every minute in which it continues to boil now will spoil it. Perhaps it cannot be served immediately, but that is no reason

why it should be left in the water, for it may easily be lifted in the strainer and laid on the top of the fish kettle with a hot cloth over it. It should be laid here in any case, that is, whether it can be served immediately or not, to let the water drain from it, and when this is accomplished it can be placed on a hot dish, covered with a napkin or fish paper, garnished neatly, and served.

It is very desirable that fish should be of uniform thickness throughout, for if one part is thick and another thin, the thin end will be in rags before the thick part is cooked through.

White fish, such as turbot or brill, should be rubbed over with lemon-juice, before being boiled ; this will help to whiten the fish and so improve its appearance.

Fish well broiled is exceedingly tasty and delicious. This mode of cooking is usually chosen for small fish, such as herrings or mackerel, or for slices or fillets of large fish. Before being broiled the fish should be dipped in oil, or dissolved butter, and it should be seasoned with pepper and salt. The gridiron should, of course, be scrupulously clean, and the bars should be greased and warmed before the fish is laid upon them. The fire also should be clear and bright. It is convenient to broil fish on a gridiron which folds over, so that the fish can be turned without being touched. When a whole fish, such as a herring or mackerel, is broiled, it should be split open down the back, wiped with a clean cloth, not washed, brushed over with oil, seasoned with pepper and salt, and then be laid with the fleshy part to the fire first.

Baking is not so usual a method of dressing fish as it deserves to be. This mode is specially suited to round white fish, such as haddock, gurnard, or codling, and with it great care is needed to keep the fish from getting dry. To this end it must not be over-cooked. A greased paper should also be laid over it in the tin, or it may be covered with egg and bread-crumbs, the object in both cases being to keep in the juices of the fish. Round fish are excellent stuffed with veal forcemeat and baked. Baked fish should be basted occasionally whilst it is being cooked.

A very excellent and pretty-looking dish may be made by filleting flat fish and baking it. I daresay you know that to fillet fish is to take the flesh from the bones in fillets. The fishmonger will undertake this business if asked to do so, but it is much better done at home, because there is no waste. The fish must first be cleaned and skinned; the head, tail and fins must be cut off. A deep cut must then be made down the centre of the fish, along the backbone, and the knife slipped in underneath and drawn under the flesh to separate it from the bone all the way down. When half the flesh is thus lifted, the fish should be turned round and the other half treated in the same way, and when one side is filleted the fish should be turned over, when the other side can be operated upon. In this way we shall have four fillets from each fish. At first, it will be found a little difficult to get the flesh quite clean from the bones, but persevere; skill will come with practice.

We will suppose that we have successfully filleted a pair of moderate-sized soles, and consequently that we have eight long fillets and a quantity of bones, etc., at our disposal. How shall we proceed?

First, we take the bones and trimmings and put them into a saucepan, and let them stew down gently to make fish stock. There is a good deal of nourishment in these trimmings, and, of course, as our object is to supply nourishment we cannot afford to throw any away. Therefore, we simmer the stock for a while, and then strain off the liquor, and use it instead of water when we come to make the sauce for our fish. I cannot speak of the sauce now, although I hope that shortly we may have a lesson on sauces; but I may say in passing that all fish sauces should, when it is possible, be made of fish stock instead of water.

As for the fillets, we first smooth them on both sides with the flat blade of a knife, and then either roll them like a rolypoly pudding, or else fold them loosely over. In either case we must remember to keep the side of the fillet which was nearest the bone to the outside, otherwise they will not keep their shape. We sprinkle a little salt on each fillet, and squeeze a few drops of lemon-juice over them to keep them white; lay them in a well-greased

baking-tin (of course, if we have chosen to roll the fillets, we must stand the little rolls on end in the tin), lay a sheet of buttered paper over the fish, and bake in a quick oven until a skewer will pierce them to the centre with ease. We drain them on kitchen paper, place them on a dish, pour the sauce over or round them, and serve. They will be done in about six minutes.

Is not this an easy way of cooking fish? It is such a good way, too. The fillets look well and taste well; there are no bones, and everything is excellent all round.

Of course, a little pains must be taken to dish the fillets neatly. If they have been simply folded over, they should be arranged in a circle, with one fillet overlapping the other, and the sauce or cooked vegetables may be put into the centre. If they have been rolled, the rolls may be put on a dish and small heaps of different colours may be put on the top of each by way of garnish. A little hard-boiled yolk of egg, a teaspoonful of green parsley, a slice of pink ham, or a little red chili, all chopped small, will answer the purpose excellently, and if the colours are contrasted prettily, and the sauce is put round neatly, the dish will look quite unique.

There is still another way of baking flat fish which renders it so savoury and delicious that I must describe it. Sole cooked in this way is called *sole au gratin. Au gratin* is a phrase usually applied to food which is covered with bread-crumbs and baked till brown. In preparing it we may either keep the fish whole or fillet it as in the last recipe.

Take a moderate-sized sole, wash and skin it, and dry it in a cloth; cut off the fins with a sharp knife, and nick the fish in two or three places on both sides. Procure a quarter of a shalot, four small mushrooms, a teaspoonful of chopped parsley, a slice of bread which has been rubbed through a sieve to make fine crumbs, a little lemon-juice, half a teacupful of strong gravy, and a little pepper and salt. The mushrooms, parsley, and shalot must all be chopped finely, and the bread crumbs must be put on a tin in the oven until lightly browned. Butter a flat baking-tin and sprinkle over it half the chopped mushroom and shalot, and a little pepper and salt, squeeze half a teaspoonful of lemon-juice over; lay the sole upon the

savoury mixture, sprinkle the remainder of the ingredients over it, and add a little more lemon-juice and the gravy, and a small piece of butter placed here and there on the fish. Sprinkle the bread-crumbs thickly over all, and bake in a quick oven. When soft in the thickest part, it is done. It will take about ten minutes, but it must on no account be over-cooked. Serve on a hot dish, and garnish prettily.

The other day the amiable fishmonger with whom I deal asked me to step into his inner room and inspect his apparatus for frying fish. Of course I did so, and I wished that I could have taken with me every girl belonging to our cookery class, for I knew that no one who had once seen what was to be seen there would ever again imagine that to fry fish properly it is necessary to have only as much melted lard in a frying pan as will suffice to keep a fish from burning. The fat in which the fishmonger fried his fish was in what looked like a copper with a fire underneath it, just as there is a fire under the copper in which clothes are boiled on washing day. The pan itself was about two feet square and six or eight inches deep. It was more than half full, not of oil nor of lard, but of good dripping. This fat was never thrown away. It was not sold for kitchen grease, as so much valuable fat is sold nowadays, to be replaced by expensive and very much inferior lard. As it gradually boiled away fresh fat was added to it, and it was used again and again and again. I did not wonder that so large a trade in fried fish was carried on in the neighbourhood when I saw what facilities the fishmonger enjoyed for frying his fish.

I have already in another place [1] spoken of the method to be adopted in frying of all kinds, and of the fat which is best suited to the purpose. The girls who have attended our class from the commencement will remember that I said then, that in true frying the article to be cooked must be entirely covered with fat, just as an article to be boiled is entirely covered with water. Fish is no exception to this rule. It should be plunged into plenty of hot fat (so hot that it is still, that a thin blue vapour

[1] See the "Frying Pan," p. 28 *et seq.*

rises from it, and that it will brown very quickly a small piece of crumb of bread thrown into it), and there left until it is brightly coloured. It may then be taken up, drained, laid on kitchen paper to free it from the outside grease, and it is ready.

Before, however, fish can be fried successfully it must be prepared. The first process of preparation consists in cleaning and trimming the fish. This is not peculiar to frying; it belongs to all other methods of cookery. The same cannot be said of the next preparatory detail, which is drying the fish thoroughly; unless the fish is perfectly dry it will not brown as it should do. Many cooks, in order to secure thorough dryness, cleanse the fish some time before it is wanted, and fold it in a clean soft cloth to absorb the moisture; others wash it, dry in a cloth, then rub flour over it, and shake the superfluous flour from it. I should advise you to do both; dry it as thoroughly as you can in a cloth, and afterwards rub it with flour; you may then be satisfied that no moisture adheres to it.

The next step is to encase the fish in an outer covering, in order to preserve the juices. This may consist of flour only (very excellent results may be produced with flour). It may be formed also of a thick batter of flour and water, of frying batter, and of beaten egg and bread or water biscuit crumbs. I believe that fishmongers almost always use the thick batter, made of flour and water. The fishmonger whom I visited told me he did, and I know that at his establishment fish is superlatively fried, as, indeed, it is at the majority of London fried fish shops. When egg and crumbs are used for this purpose, the yolk and white of egg should be lightly beaten together, and the crumbs should be stale, dry, and well sifted, to make them even. Unless this is done, the coarser crumbs will fall off, imparting to the fish that dappled appearance which is so frequent and so undesirable.

Before going further, I must say a word or two about the bread-crumbs used in frying fish. In a great many households stale bread is one of the burdens which press on the mind and conscience of the housekeeper. If the members of her family like crust, the crumb cannot be

disposed of; if they like crumb, the crusts increase and multiply. "Oh," she thinks, "how can I allow all this nourishing food to be wasted, when there are so many poor creatures starving!" So, in order to ease her mind, she makes a handsome present of the stale bread to the first beggar who knocks at her door. He receives it with effusion or growls, according to his disposition, yet in either case it is most likely that if the donor walk out a few minutes afterwards, she will find the broken bread thrown into the road. The professional beggar has not yet been brought so low that he has to eat broken crusts; he throws them from him with scorn.

Doubtless there are honest poor folks who would be thankful for the pieces, but they do not go begging in dirt and rags from door to door. They hide their heads in miserable homes, and struggle bravely with poverty and want. If we want to help them we must seek them out, give them work, and help them to support themselves. It is not probable that we can afford to do this so long as we permit good food to be wasted. Therefore, our first duty is to look well to our own ways, and try, even in this small difficulty, to follow the example of One who, while He devoted His life to healing the sick and comforting the sorrowful, did not forget to tell His followers to "gather up the fragments, that nothing should be lost."

It comes, then, to this: if we wish to prevent waste, we must take the first step towards it in our own homes, and make the most of the materials at our command. Crusts and broken pieces of bread are really very valuable, and one very excellent way of employing them is to use them for frying fish. We shall find it to our advantage, therefore, to preserve them for this purpose. It is not unlikely that if a cook has to prepare crumbs for a special dish, at the moment, she will be in a hurry, and not have time to dry and sift the crumbs properly, and so her fish may be spoiled. But if she has a supply of crumbs on hand she will have no difficulty in this direction. Let her, therefore, when she has crusts or stale bread which she has no other use for, sift them through a fine wire sieve, dry them thoroughly in a cool oven (not allowing them to brown), and keep them in a bottle tightly corked and

ready for use when wanted. Thus prepared, they will keep for a while.

A sole is a typical fish for frying, and therefore we will suppose that we are about to fry a sole, and that it is skinned, trimmed, and perfectly dry. We put the fat (sufficiently deep to cover the fish) on the fire to heat gradually. We may then adopt one of five methods :—

1st. Roll the fish in flour, shake the loose flour from it, and fry. When rolled in flour, or dipped in batter, the fish should be prepared just before it is fried.

2nd. Brush the fish with milk, cover it with flour, shake the loose flour from it, and fry.

3rd. Dip the fish into thick batter of flour and water, and fry.

4th. Dip the fish into frying batter, and fry.

5th. Beat an egg lightly, lay the fish in it, brush it all over with egg, then stick a fork into the head of the fish and lift it out, lay it on bread-crumbs, shake crumbs over it to cover it entirely, lift it out once more with a fork, and press the crumbs on gently with the flat side of a knife, and fry. When egg and bread-crumbs are used, the fish may be prepared some time before it is to be fried.

Perhaps you are inclined to say, Why not turn the fish with our fingers? Why is it necessary that we should use a fork or skewer? Because, after the fish has been egged it must not be handled. If it is, the egg will be taken off in places, and this will prevent the crumbs adhering to the fish. It is desirable, also, that the crumbs should be pressed on with a knife, otherwise they also may drop off and spoil the look of the fish.

The fish is now ready, and when the fat also is ready for it, it may be laid in the hot fat, which should be deep enough to cover it. I daresay you remember that I said that the fat was hot enough when a light blue film came from it. Yet even in this there is room for the exercise of judgment and experience. Large fish, which need to be cooked through, should not have the fat so hot as small fish, which require very little cooking.

The rule, therefore, is, the smaller the fish the hotter the fat. Whitebait, which are the smallest of all fish, need fat so hot that it seems to be almost on the point of

burning. A good-sized sole, on the other hand, should be cooked in fat from which the blue film rises only. Very large flat fish are seldom cooked whole, however. They are usually filleted, and this process was described at our last lesson. Filleted fish and small fish should be put into the fat in a frying basket.

I know quite well what some of my readers are thinking as they read this : "It is all very well for you, who have just been to see the frying kettle at the fish-shop, two feet square and six or eight inches deep, to speak of how fish should be fried. But we have no pan of this size. Small pieces of fish we might fry in an iron sauce-pan, but for large fish, such as soles, we have to use the frying-pan, and what can we do with it?"

I do not suppose you have such a pan, and it is quite certain that if you have not got it you cannot use it, and also that you must manage with the utensils you have at your command. If you have a sole to fry, and do not possess a pan large enough or deep enough to contain fat which will cover the fish entirely, you must use the frying-pan, and cook first one side of the fish and then the other. The frying will not be so easily done in this case, but it can be done for all that. There is this consolation attending it : it is very usually done thus. For one person who has a large frying kettle there are hundreds who have nothing but a frying-pan, and many of the latter can fry fish very well too. The only thing that we have to remember under these circumstances is to have at any rate a good depth of fat, as much as we can get and find room for, and to have it hot. Then we lay our fish in, and when one side is cooked we turn the fish skilfully over to the other side. This is the awkward part of the business. Stick a strong fork into the fish near the head and turn it that way ; do not attempt to do so with the slice. When the fish is done, drain it, put it between two folds of kitchen paper to free it from grease (all fried things should be laid on kitchen paper before they are served) ; then lay it on a dish covered with a napkin or with a fish paper, and it is ready.

"When the fish is done!" But how are we to know when it is done? How long will it take to fry? That must depend upon its size and thickness. A moderate-

sized sole, for example, would be done in about seven minutes, a very large sole would require fifteen minutes ; fillets of fish would be done in about a minute. There is one thing to be said : it is only while you are new to the business that you will have any doubt on this point. A little experience will enable you to tell at once when the fish is cooked. Till you gain this experience you will do no harm if you test the fish—that is, stick a knife into the thickest part as soon as it colours, and take a peep to see how things are progressing. When the flesh leaves the bone easily, the fish is cooked. It ought to look moist, not dry, otherwise it is over-cooked. It is well to remember that fish is much more frequently over-cooked than under-cooked. It is an excellent plan to have some finely-sifted bread raspings at hand, and to sprinkle a pinch over the place where the knife was stuck in, and any other weak parts there may be, at the last moment, when the fish is dished ready for the table, just as artists give one or two finishing touches to their pictures after they are hung on the walls of the Academy.

A little while ago I said that frying batter was an excellent coating for fish that was to be fried. This batter is made as follows :—

Frying Batter.—Put a quarter of a pound of flour and a pinch of salt into a bowl, and mix it very smoothly with two tablespoonfuls of pure salad oil. Stir in gradually one gill of lukewarm water, and beat well and briskly. Let the batter stand for a while, then ten minutes before it is wanted stir lightly into it the whites of two eggs which have been whisked to a firm froth.

Thick plaice neatly filleted is excellent when dipped in this batter and fried, or even when it is simply dried and rolled in flour and fried. When thus cooked and accompanied by Dutch sauce, plaice is, in my humble opinion, quite a superior dish. When I say this, I am quite aware that plaice is cheap fish, and that it is scorned by many people. This is because it is inexpensive, and therefore cooks will not condescend to find out which is the best way of cooking it. If only it were difficult to get, and sold at a high price, cooks would take the trouble to learn how to cook it properly, and then epicures would speak of it rapturously, and poor folks would wish they could

get it. But that is always the way. What comes to us easily we scorn, while we over-estimate that which is obtained with difficulty.

There are still two or three little details which should be noted with regard to frying fish. One is, that when there are a number of fish or pieces of fish to be fried, all should be prepared before any are cooked, otherwise the cook may get into difficulties; another is, that not many pieces of fish should be put into the hot fat at once: if they are, the fat will be cooled too much, and the fish will not brown properly, and will be greasy. The third point worth noticing is, that the fat should be taken from the fire as soon as it is done with; it should be allowed to cool a minute or two, and then poured through a strainer into a basin, and put by for future use. It is necessary that it should cool before it is strained, otherwise it will spoil the strainer.

The fat should be strained each time it is used, because little pieces of crumb or batter are sure to fall into it, and if these are not taken out they will burn and discolour the fat. You will remember that we have to preserve our fat and use it again and again, never throwing it out, though adding to it occasionally. To do this we must be careful of it all the way through, not by fits and starts, but constantly. I once knew a very clever cook who said that she had used the same fat for more than a year for all sorts of things—sweets, fish, and meats—and that it was excellent all through. I should not recommend you to adopt this plan, because I think it is safer to keep the fat for frying fish and the fat for frying sweets, etc., separate, but still the thing can be done, and has been done.

Fried fish is usually garnished with fried parsley. To prepare this, we wash a few sprigs of parsley, dry it well in a cloth, put it in the frying basket, and dip it in the hot fat for a second or two till it is quite crisp. If kept in the fat too long it will be discoloured. When about to fry parsley the cook should remember not to hold her face too near the pan, for parsley contains so much water that it is sure to make the fat bubble, and if not careful she may be burnt.

I think now I have spoken of all the general principles of frying fish, and I hope the hints I have given will be

useful when you carry them out for yourself. Do not be discouraged if you do not succeed perfectly the first time of trying. Frying fish is not at all easy work, but skill in this direction, as in so many others, comes with patience and perseverance, and remember that—

> "Experience join'd with common sense
> To mortals is a providence."

XVI.

SAUCES, AND HOW TO MAKE THEM.

A GREAT French cook, Brillat Savarin, once said, "*On devient cuisinier on naît saucier*," which, freely translated, means, "You may learn to cook, but it requires genius to make sauce." Another great Frenchman, often quoted—Talleyrand—said that "England was a country with twenty-four religions and one sauce"—melted butter. You will see, therefore, that people who understand the subject do not consider sauce-making very easy work. Nevertheless, we will do our best with it, and I daresay we shall be able to produce something which will satisfy our friends, even though we cannot boast either genius or infallibility.

You will understand that we are not talking now about gravy, but about sauces. Gravy is the juice of meat, but sauce is a liquid served with food to improve its flavour. Sauces are generally looked upon as rather elaborate preparations. Some of them are so, and exceedingly delicious into the bargain. All sorts of condiments and flavours enter into their preparation, and the result is the production of delicate combinations of unheard-of and far-fetched luxuries, which it requires the acquired taste of an epicure to appreciate, while no inquiries must be made about the cost thereof.

With sauces of this kind I must decline to have anything whatever to do. Let people who want them, and

can afford to pay for them, engage professionals to make them. I would very much rather devote my energies to helping girls who are trying to prepare good, wholesome, and appetising sauce for their friends at a moderate cost. If only I can give a few hints which will prove of use to those who are doing this in perplexity and difficulty I shall be quite satisfied in this direction ; in fact, I shall feel that I have not lived in vain, and, as poor Artemus Ward said, I should not like to live in vain—I would rather live in London.

One reason why even moderate sauces are looked at with suspicion is, that the cooks who make them will prepare such a large quantity at a time. They will not be content with making enough and no more. I went to dine with a friend the other day, and four of us sat down to dinner. Amongst other good things we had roast fowls, bread sauce, and the ubiquitous melted butter. I am speaking within the mark when I say there was not less than a pint of bread sauce and a pint and a quarter of melted butter. What a waste this was both of time and material. Not a quarter of a pint of either sauce was used ; but I could not help wondering what became of that which was sent downstairs. I have very little doubt that if we could have ascertained its ultimate destination, we should have discovered that it was thrown away. One or two experiences of this kind are enough to make any housekeeper avoid sauce.

It was so unnecessary too. An ounce of butter, three-quarters of an ounce of flour, and half a pint of water would have made melted butter for twice the number of people, while three ounces of butter for the same measure of water would have been an ample allowance.

Then as to the method of making that melted butter. Now, I can fancy some one saying, "Surely you are not going to tell us how to make melted buttter? We all know that." If you do, I apologize ; but I beg to assure you that your knowledge is not universal. It is a very unusual thing to see well-made melted butter. It is our one English sauce, yet it is rarely properly prepared.

One would think that there was no room for variety of procedure with simple ingredients like those required here ; yet I am merely stating a fact when I say that

melted butter is seldom well-made. At the risk, therefore, of saying what may be regarded as unnecessary, I must ask to be allowed to describe how I should make melted butter, if I were asked to do so.

I should take a small saucepan (not an iron one, for iron is not suited to the purpose), melt an ounce of butter in it, draw the pan to one side, and stir in three-quarters of an ounce of flour (remembering always that in making sauce we must take more butter than we do flour). I should beat the mixture with the back of a wooden spoon until it is quite smooth. Sauce with lumps in it is objectionable, and now is the time to dispose of the lumps. I should then pour in, gradually, half a pint of cold water, stirring the sauce all the time, and keep stirring it till it boiled, add a little salt and pepper, or a grate of nutmeg if liked, let the sauce boil for three minutes, and it would be ready. The liquid should coat the spoon.

Sauce thus made is fairly good as it is. It would, however, be very considerably improved if a little cold butter were stirred into it off the fire just before it was served. The quantity of butter thus added at the last moment might vary according to the degree of richness required. It must be remembered, however, that the sauce should not boil after the cold butter is added, and that it should be put in at the last minute. Many cooks break up the butter into small pieces in order to make it melt quickly.

Melted butter is the basis of a great many sauces, and it is astonishing what variations may be introduced into it. A little lemon-juice or white wine vinegar may be added to it, or a tablespoonful of cream may be stirred in at the moment of serving. The addition of the yolk of one egg will convert it into sauce blanche—excellent for serving with cauliflower. If two or even three eggs are added with lemon-juice the sauce will be further improved. A dessertspoonful of washed and picked parsley, finely shred and thrown into melted butter, makes it into maître d'hotel sauce suitable for boiled mutton or new potatoes boiled. Or chopped fennel, blanched and chopped tarragon, picked shrimps, anchovy essence, bruised capers, onion pulp, chopped onion, hard-boiled eggs, or gherkins finely minced, may be stirred in, and the melted

butter will thus be converted into fennel, tarragon, shrimp, anchovy, caper, onion, egg, or a variety of *piquante* sauce. The addition of sugar, treacle, wine, or brandy will make it into sauce suitable for puddings. It must always be remembered that egg-yolk, cream, and chopped parsley, should not boil in the sauce, they should be stirred in at the last moment; also that white onion sauce should be made with milk instead of water. In brown onion sauce the onions are browned before being used.

When sauce is to be served with meat or fish, stock made of the trimmings should be substituted for the water. When it is practicable, it is always desirable to use even weak stock instead of water, because it contains more nourishment. Of course, brown stock is taken for brown sauces, and white stock for white sauces. When stock is used, it should be added very gradually. If hot stock were thrown in all at once, the sauce would be lumpy. Skim milk is frequently used instead of white stock in making white sauce, for economy's sake.

For the same reason—economy—dripping is occasionally used instead of butter in making sauce. If anyone feels inclined to look scornful on hearing this, I should like to remark that for every culinary purpose good dripping is to be preferred to bad butter. You may make excellent sauce with pure dripping; it is not possible to make sauce that will even pass muster with rancid butter. A smaller quantity of dripping than butter should be used however, or the flavour of the sauce will not be good. Excellent fish sauce may be made by adding lemon-juice, parsley, and cream to melted butter. When cream is used, less butter is needed.

Brown sauce and white sauce are very favourite preparations, suited for a variety of dishes. Brown sauce may be made as follows:—Peel a shalot, or small onion, scrape half a moderate-sized carrot, remove the dark skin and dark stalk from three mushrooms; chop all finely Melt an ounce of butter in a saucepan, sprinkle an ounce of flour into it, and beat it to prevent it forming into lumps. Pour in gradually half a pint of brown stock, stirring all the time; then add the vegetables, a bay leaf, and a sprig of thyme. Draw the pan back, and let the sauce simmer for twenty minutes. Add pepper and salt,

and two tablespoonfuls of Harvey's sauce ; strain and serve. If the vegetables are allowed to "sweat" in butter —that is, fry gently without discolouring—they will yield their flavour better.

The flavour of this brown sauce may be varied in accordance with not only the taste of the maker, but the contents of the store-closet, care being taken always to make it suited to the meat it is to accompany. Thus, a little celery may be substituted for the mushrooms, and a slice of turnip may be added, or lemon-peel, parsley, or a bunch of sweet herbs may be introduced. A slice of lean ham is a valuable flavouring ingredient. Some cooks think that good brown sauce cannot be made without ham ; and there is a story told of a cook who, having to prepare a little supper for a prince, ordered fifty hams, only one of which was to go to table,—the rest were to be used in making sauces. Chopped pickle or chopped oysters will also give piquancy to a sauce. Essence of anchovy, too, is a valuable flavourer. A very small quantity, not enough to suggest its own taste, may be put into other than fish sauces, because anchovy possesses the property of bringing out other flavours. Wine and made sauces, such as Harvey, ketchup, or Worcester sauce, are also frequently added ; but these should be introduced very judiciously, because a really good sauce should taste of something else than ketchup. Sometimes the sauce looks very well, but it is not sufficiently brown. Drab brown sauce should never be sent to table : it is enough to spoil anyone's appetite. There are various ways of supplying colour to brown sauce. Roux, or a mixture of flour and butter browned together over the fire, is employed, as are also burnt onions, browning, and even burnt sugar. To my mind the most convenient preparation which can be procured is the "Pastilles Carpentier." It is sold in tins, to be bought of any grocer, and will keep any length of time. A tin costing fivepence will supply colour for a great many dishes.

It will be understood, therefore, that what is called Espagnol (Spanish), or brown sauce is merely good stock well-flavoured with vegetables, and made thick and brown.

White sauce is another celebrated French sauce ; indeed brown sauce and white sauce, or, in other words,

Espagnol and Veloutée, may be said to be to the French what melted butter is to the English—the foundation of many others. Béchamel, Allemand or German, Dutch or Hollandais, poulette, oyster, celery, and many other sauces are made from white sauce. It consists of rich white stock delicately flavoured and mixed with cream, eggs, or whatever else is its distinctive ingredient.

White sauce is less frequently well-made than brown sauce, but the following recipe will, I think, be found excellent.

White Sauce.—Prepare and chop small two ounces of lean ham ; melt two ounces of butter in a stewpan, throw in the ham, and let it fry gently, not discolour. Sprinkle an ounce and a half of flour over, and beat till smooth. Add gradually a pint of white stock, two small carrots, and six button mushrooms, stir the sauce till it boils ; draw the pan back, and simmer gently till thick. Remove the fat from the sauce as it rises, strain it through a tammy, and add last of all a gill of cream and a few drops of lemon-juice.

Perhaps I had better say in explanation that superior sauces are best made perfectly smooth by being passed through a tammy, or loose cloth especially manufactured for the purpose. The cloth should be laid over a basin, and the sauce poured upon it. The cloth should then be folded over to hold the sauce securely ; one person should take it up at one end, and another at the opposite end, and then the two operators should twist their ends different ways so as to squeeze the liquid through. The cream may be added afterwards.

White sauce is frequently used to *coat* fowls, etc. ; that is, it is made very thick, and then laid gently over to cover the meat entirely. Sauce to be used thus should be stiff, so that it will not run off the meat ; therefore it is made either with stock that is so strong that it jellies when cold, or with stock in which a little gelatine has been dissolved.

Plain white sauce may be made with some of the liquor in which fowls or rabbits have been boiled, if a little carrot and onion, three or four peppercorns, and a small piece of mace or lemon peel be simmered in it till it is pleasantly flavoured. It should then be strained, skimmed, reduced—that is, boiled down quickly till the required

quantity only remains—thickened, and mixed with cream. Sauce is made stronger and better by being well reduced. If you want to have good sauces, reduce them well.

Bread sauce is a very great favourite in English homes. To make it, prepare about an ounce and a half of bread-crumbs by rubbing stale bread through a wire sieve. Put these in a stewpan with half a pint of milk, add a little salt, and five or six peppercorns. Let the crumbs soak for a few minutes only, then put the stewpan on the fire, and stir the sauce till it boils. Remove the peppercorns, add a tablespoonful of cream, and serve. If liked, a small onion can be boiled with the bread-crumbs and removed with the peppercorns. Many people would consider it a great improvement. For variety's sake, a little nutmeg may be added to the sauce. When the sauce is wanted very good, the crumbs and onion, after being boiled in the milk, may be rubbed through a hair sieve.

It would, of course, be impossible in one article to give even an idea of the numerous sauces of everyday life. I have, therefore, contented myself with describing as clearly as I could how the fundamental sauces, those which are the foundation of others, are made. I have one more suggestion to offer with regard to them. It is, that when delicately-prepared sauces have to be kept hot for a while, they should not be left to simmer in the saucepan, as this would spoil them; but that, instead, the vessel in which they are should be placed in another containing hot water to the depth of four or five inches. This hot water vessel will constitute an improvised *bain marie*. It may be put by the side of the fire; and here the sauce can be kept hot till wanted, without fear of its flavour being injured by overheating.

XVII.

CREAMS.

THERE is so much room for variety in this branch of cookery that the difficulty is to know where to begin. However, the best thing we can do is to speak of general rules of universal application, and urge the mem-

bers of our class to try the various combinations which are suggested for themselves, and if possible to invent one or two on their own account.

When we come to the chapter in which we talk of making jelly, you will find that we come to the conclusion that an ounce of good gelatine would be needed to set a pint and a half of liquid, exclusive of the wine and brandy; that is to say, an ounce of good gelatine is considered sufficient for about a pint and three-quarters of liquid. In making creams, however, we have to remember that the materials used have a little more consistency than those generally employed in making jelly, and therefore rather less gelatine is needed. Consequently, we may calculate on being able to make a quart of cream with an ounce of gelatine, and occasionally a still smaller portion of stiffening is necessary.

Of course the gelatine must be soaked for an hour, or longer if possible, in as much milk as will barely cover it. When it has absorbed all the liquid, and has swelled considerably, it should be turned into a small stewpan, and stirred over the fire until it has entirely dissolved. It must then be allowed to cool before it is mixed with the other ingredients.

In very rich creams, cream only, pleasantly flavoured, is used. Thus made, however, cream is expensive, and some people would consider it a little sickly. It is very usual, therefore, to use half cream and half milk, and to enrich the milk by making a custard of it with eggs. To make the custard we beat in a basin the yolks of three and the white of one egg. Well strain these, and mix them with half a pint of milk. We pour the mixture into a jug, set this in a saucepan of hot water over the fire, and stir the contents of the jug until the custard is thick enough to coat the spoon, when we take it up. We must be careful not to boil our custard too long, or it will curdle. What is wanted is that it should be thick, as thick as the double cream, but perfectly smooth. Before the cream is added to the custard it should be well whipped, by which means it will not only be made lighter, but it will expand and occupy more room. Here I must say a word about the method of whipping cream.

For one thing we must have "double" cream, that is, cream which is very thick, in consequence of its having stood twenty-four hours on the milk. The cream should be put into a cool place until it is wanted ; indeed, if it has to stand a little while before being used, the vessel containing it should be put into another one which has cold water in it, and the cream should be left uncovered. When the custard and gelatine are almost cool, we put the cream into a large bowl, and whisk it lightly and regularly with an ordinary egg-whisk until, though still smooth, it begins to stiffen. The great thing in doing this is to stop in plenty of time. If we keep on only half a minute too long our cream will be spoilt, because it will crack or "turn" as it is called. We may know when it is sufficiently whisked by its hanging to the spoon when the latter is lifted up. We shall find that the cream after it is whipped occupies very nearly twice as much room as it did originally. If we liked, instead of using half a pint of whipped cream, we could use a quarter of a pint, to which the white of two eggs beaten to froth had been added. White of egg is often added to cream which is to be whipped, and the object of the addition is chiefly to increase the quantity. We should always remember to whisk cream in a cool place. It is much more difficult to whip in summer time than it is in winter. If, notwithstanding all our care, it should turn slightly, a spoonful of something cold, milk or water, should be put with it.

We may now flavour the custard with an ounce of white sugar, half a teaspoonful of essence of vanilla, two tablespoonfuls of brandy, if this is allowed. Brandy is frequently omitted ; but it is a very great improvement to a cream of this kind, for vanilla and brandy always go well together. If the custard be cool, we stir the whipped cream lightly into it, and turn the whole into a mould, which has, of course, been first scalded with boiling water, then rinsed out with cold water, and left wet.

As this cream may serve as a sort of model for an indefinite number of creams, I will give the recipe once more, briefly and altogether, so that there may be no mistake. Soak an ounce of gelatine in as much milk as will barely cover it. Make a custard with half a pint

of milk, the yolks of three and the white of one egg. Add a tablespoonful of white sugar, half a teaspoonful of essence of vanilla, and two tablespoonfuls of brandy. When the custard is cool, stir in lightly half a pint of cream, which has been whipped to a froth. Pour the mixture into a mould, and put it on ice, or in a cool place till set.

If we wished to make a fruit cream we should observe still the same proportions and follow the same method, but we should substitute fruit pulp for the custard. This fruit pulp may be made either with fresh fruit, with jam, or with tinned fruit. Fresh juicy fruit, such as raspberries or strawberries, should be picked, then have a little white sugar sprinkled over them to make the juice flow freely. It should then be rubbed through a hair sieve, to make the pulp. A pint of fresh fruit will be sufficient for half a pint of cream.

Hard fruit should be slightly stewed before it is used, or it will not go through the sieve easily. Sometimes it is sufficient to chop the fruit small, or pound it before passing it through the sieve. A very delicious cream may be made in this way with tinned pine-apple.

When preserved fruit is used, two good tablespoonfuls of jam should be stewed with water, and the juice should be strained off. A little lemon-juice may be added to jam, but it is not required for fresh fruit. A very pretty effect may be produced by moulding jelly and cream together, or by mixing creams of different colours. Thus, a mould may be filled to the depth of an inch with clear colourless jelly, garnished with three or four large green grapes. When this is slightly set the mould may be filled with strawberry cream. Another effective dish may be made by filling a mould with alternate layers of half an inch thick chocolate cream and custard cream. Pink and white layers may be substituted for the brown and white by colouring half the custard cream with cochineal. To make chocolate cream, dissolve four ounces of chocolate in a pint and a half of milk, and boil for ten minutes, flavour with vanilla, and add sugar to taste. Dissolve a third of an ounce of gelatine in a little milk; add this when cool. This cream is very good moulded by itself, and served with custard

Sometimes jellies and creams are put into a mould which is fitted with a cylinder inside. Clear jelly is put into the outer portion of the mould ; and when this has set, the inner cylinder is taken out and the centre is filled with cream. Cylinder moulds are rather expensive ; but a cheap substitute may be made with a plain round mould and a gallipot, or a circular mould and a small basin. When these are used, the small mould is placed inside the other until the outer portion of jelly is set. It is then removed, and the vacant space is filled with cream.

Blanc-mange, or as it means literally, white food, ought, strictly speaking, to be always flavoured with almonds. It is, however, very usually flavoured with laurel leaves, cinnamon, lemon, or essence. It may be made with calves' feet stock, gelatine, cornflour, or arrowroot, and is generally named after the ingredient of which it is composed ; thus we have cornflour blanc-mange, ground rice blanc-mange, arrowroot blanc-mange, etc. When gelatine is used proceed as follows : Soak an ounce of gelatine in as much milk as will cover it, blanch and pound half an ounce of sweet almonds and four or five bitter ones, and moisten them every now and then with a few drops of water to keep them from turning to oil. Put with the paste rather less than a quart of new milk, and turn it into a saucepan with the soaked gelatine and a little sugar. Stir the mixture over the fire until the gelatine is dissolved, and strain it through a napkin into a jug ; and when it is almost cold mould it, and be careful to pour it off slowly and gently for fear any sediment still remains at the bottom. If the flavour is liked, a larger quantity of almonds may be used, but flavouring of any kind is like sugar. Some people like an abundance, and others are satisfied with a mere suspicion. A cook, however, should study the taste of those for whom she labours. If she satisfy them, and is able to lay the flattering unction to her soul that they have reason to be satisfied, she may disregard theories.

Cream alone, or cream and milk, is sometimes used when a very rich blanc-mange is wanted. When this is introduced, the blanc-mange should first be made with milk, and the cream should be added afterwards unboiled.

Blanc-mange made with cornflour is very easily prepared. Take four even tablespoonfuls of cornflour, which has been mixed to a smooth paste with a little cold milk, pour gradually on it a quart of boiling milk, which has been sweetened pleasantly, and flavoured either with lemon, cinnamon, or essence; stir it well to keep it from getting into lumps, put it back into the saucepan, and boil it for two or three minutes, or till it leaves the side of the saucepan with the spoon, stirring it briskly all the time. Pour it into a damp mould, and when cold and set, turn it upon a glass dish and serve it with stewed fruit. For the sake of appearance blanc-mange can, if liked, be coloured with a little cochineal, or a little bright-coloured jelly may be set at the bottom of the mould before the blanc-mange is poured in. Cornflour blanc-mange is very wholesome and inexpensive; and when it is put on a bright clear glass dish, and pleasantly flavoured, and served with a good *compote* of fruit, it is a preparation by no means to be despised.

XVIII.

HOW TO MAKE JELLY.

In all the talks we have had together about cookery, we have never said anything about making jelly. Yet this is very interesting work, and very easy when we once know how to do it. I think, therefore, it will be well for us to give our attention to-day to this subject.

Jelly is usually made nowadays either from calves' feet or from gelatine. The process is easier when the latter is used, but it is generally believed that the jelly is more nourishing when calves' feet are employed. There is a good deal of doubt at the present time as to the value of gelatine as food. I daresay you have noticed that people think and speak very differently about food now to what they did a few years ago. Formerly they used to eat what was set before them, and satisfy their hunger and be done with it. But now they take every-

thing to pieces as it were. They calculate what proportion of the food will make flesh, what will make bone, and what will give warmth or force. They cannot eat a mutton chop comfortably without thinking what effect it will have on their constitution, and wondering whether they would not have done better to have had a rump steak instead.

This is quite a step in the right direction, and I am not going to say a word against it. I think it is most necessary that those who have to prepare food should understand its nature and value, so that they may procure what is wholesome and nourishing. At the same time, take what pains we may, we are obliged to confess our ignorance every now and again. The wisest man in the world knows comparatively little of what there is to be known. When wise men are in doubt on a subject, ordinary folks will not err very greatly if they trust a little to instinct and custom. In the case of food we may call instinct healthy appetite. Healthy appetite led people to take bread with butter, and beans with bacon, long before science confirmed the custom, and said that these were just the things that ought to go together. People who have a healthy appetite enjoy a little jelly now and then; and therefore, though we cannot say it is valuable from a nourishing point of view, there cannot be much harm in our making it, and serving them with it occasionally. We will not value it too highly, we will not give it and nothing else to invalids, and trust to it to restore their strength and power; but we will take it in moderation, and believe that as we enjoy it, it will do us good, even though we cannot say to what extent it will benefit us.

Jelly made from calves' feet, though more nourishing is more expensive, and takes longer to make than when gelatine is used, because the calves' feet stock has to be made the day before the jelly. Gelatine, on the contrary, only needs to be dissolved before the jelly is made; and as the after process is the same in both cases, I will first describe how calves' feet stock should be made, and then say what should be done to make the jelly clear and bright.

We will suppose that we wish to make a quart of stock. We take two calves' feet, the price of which is uncertain.

They will be cheap when veal is cheap, that is about Easter to the middle of August, when, I daresay, you would be able to get them for 4d. or 6d. each ; while at other times you would have to pay perhaps 1s. each for them, perhaps more. They are sold scalded and prepared by the butcher, but we must not suppose that they are quite ready for use when they leave his hands. They may look very white and delicate, but they must be blanched before being used ; for you must remember that the more impurity you can get rid of in these early stages the easier your after task will be.

Let your first business be, therefore, to divide each foot into four pieces, cutting first through the joint, then between the hoofs, and sawing through the bone. Put all these pieces into a stewpan with sufficient cold water to cover them, and let them come to the boil. This is blanching them. Take them out, wash them in fresh cold water, pour away the water they were boiled in, rinse out the pan, and put the pieces in again with five pints of fresh cold water. Put this on to boil, skim it well (the clearness of the jelly depends very much on this being done), and let it simmer gently for about six hours, or until the liquor is reduced to a little less than one quart. When this point is reached, put a hair sieve over a basin, strain the stock into it, put it aside, and let it get quite cold. Next day skim off the fat with an iron spoon which has been dipped into boiling water, and afterwards dab it lightly with a cloth dipped in hot water, in order to get perfect freedom from grease.

When the stock has been taken up without either fat or the sediment which has settled at the bottom, it is ready to be flavoured and cleared. To do this we put it in a stewpan. We wipe two lemons quite clean, and pare off the rind very thinly, being careful to take none of the white part with the yellow, for, as everyone knows, the white part is bitter, and would spoil the taste of our jelly. The rind we put with the stock, and also the strained juice of three lemons, three ounces of sugar, an inch of stick cinnamon, and three cloves. We break two eggs (one egg for each pint of jelly of this consistency), and throw the whites, with the crushed shells, which have been wiped clean, into the pan. We then whisk all

briskly over the fire till the jelly boils up to the top. We draw the pan back, put on the lid half-way, and without touching the crust which will have formed on the surface, we let the jelly stand for twenty minutes. By that time it may be run through the strainer. A wineglassful of sherry and half a wineglassful of brandy may be added after the jelly has run through. Their value would be lost if they were to be boiled with the other ingredients.

Now we will suppose that we wish to make the same kind of jelly with gelatine. And first we must remember that it needs a little judgment to determine how much gelatine will be required for a given quantity of jelly. For one thing, the weather has to be considered, a smaller proportion of stiffening being needed in cold than in hot weather. The size of the moulds, too, has to be taken into consideration, for jelly will set more easily in small moulds than in large ones. The quality of the gelatine, too, is a point to be thought of, although the gelatine of respectable dealers may be relied upon with tolerable security. It is a mistake to make jelly too stiff, because it quite destroys its delicacy. A jelly ought to keep its shape, and yet tremble in the dish when touched with a spoon, and it ought to dissolve instantly when put into the mouth. I once saw some jelly which was so stiff that it could have been tossed across the table from one glass dish to another without fear of being broken. The cook who made it was exceedingly proud of it. She said, "You don't break my jellies in a hurry." I thought to myself, "No, and you would not eat them in a hurry either," for I knew the jelly would taste like glue. I did not think it was good jelly, though it might be firm.

There is still another point to be considered. The more gelatine we use, the more eggs we shall require for clearing. I daresay you remember that when we were talking about clarifying soup, we said that the quantity of raw meat needed depended not upon the quantity of stock, but upon the meat used in making the stock. It is the same here; the stiffer the jelly the more difficult it will be to clear, and the more eggs will be required for the purpose. At the same time our jelly must be stiff enough, or it will break in the dish, and that will constitute it a failure.

Altogether, I think we may say, that with average gelatine, one ounce may be taken for a pint and a half of liquid, exclusive of a wineglassful of sherry, and half a wineglassful of brandy; while in hot weather, when ice cannot be obtained, an ounce of gelatine should be taken for a pint of liquid.

As to the method of preparing jelly with gelatine, we first measure the quantity of water we think it wise to use; we then soak the gelatine in as much water as will cover it, for about an hour; dissolve it in a little more water, add the remainder with the sugar, lemon, and flavouring ingredients. Put the saucepan on the fire, and proceed as for calves' feet jelly; that is, we whisk it till it rises in the pan, draw it back, and let it stand for twenty minutes, strain it, add the wine, and put it into the mould.

All sorts of jelly may be made by varying the flavour and following the directions here given. Orange jelly is made by using oranges instead of lemons. In maraschino jelly, maraschino is used instead of wine; ditto, noyeau; ditto, various liqueurs. In various fruit jellies, the juice of fruit is mixed with water to make up the quantity of liquid, and wine may then be omitted. In every case there must be more lemon-juice than lemon rind, for acid helps to clear the jelly as well as to flavour it.

One word must be said about straining the jelly. Many cooks recommend the use of the close flannel bags ordinarily used for the purpose. For my part I do not like these bags. The scum which forms at the top of the jelly is the real filter for the liquid, and we want to keep this as unbroken as possible. If we pour the contents of our pan from a height, as we must do if we use the jelly-bag, we can scarcely help disturbing our filter. A very convenient strainer for jelly may be made by putting a kitchen chair (which is without rails on the inside) upside down on a table, and tying the four corners of a perfectly clean tea-cloth to the four legs of the chair which stand upright. We must be quite sure that neither soap nor soda has been used in washing the cloth, and also that it has been rinsed through very hot water just before it is used. This will supply all that is wanted in the way of a jelly-bag, and all we have to do is to put a dish underneath the

cloth to receive the liquid jelly, and to pour the latter in gradually with a cup, and not to break the scum. If we have followed the directions given, our jelly will be pure and clear; it will taste excellent, and look inviting. If, notwithstanding the care we have taken, we find the jelly is not quite clear, we may strain it a second or even a third time. It is not likely, however, that this will be required. If there has been a mistake or omission, we may boil it again with another egg. If, however, we have been successful, and our jelly is all that we want it to be, we may add the wine and brandy, and prepare to mould it.

Even at this late stage of the proceedings there is something to remember. It is that the jelly must be almost cold before it is put into the mould. If too hot, it will become cloudy when brought in contact with the tin. Moulds for jelly are made of tin and copper, and also of earthenware. The metal ones are the best, because the jelly is more easily turned out of them than it is out of earthenware ones. When jelly is very stiff, the mould must be dipped quickly in and out of hot water, shaken well, then placed upside down on a dish. In all probability the jelly will leave the mould, which can then be lifted from it.

The appearance of our jelly depends very much upon the way in which it is moulded, and at this point we may vary it to any extent. It is very usual to introduce fruits, cherries, grapes, sections of oranges, pistachio kernels, or any bright decoration which is suitable, into the jelly. When doing this we must be careful first to put a layer of jelly, enough to cover the bottom of the mould, and let this become almost stiff, then arrange the fruit on it, and pour a little cold jelly on it, gently, to fix the decoration. Let this also set lightly, and repeat. It requires a little practice to know exactly when to put in the ornamentation. If the jelly is not stiff enough, the fruit will sink through it; if too stiff, the layers may separate. Sometimes jelly of different colours is thus moulded together, or blanc-mange and jelly are arranged in alternate layers, and preparations of this kind are exceedingly effective.

Meats, fowl, fish, game, and salads are frequently decorated with savoury or aspic jelly. This is made just like sweet jelly, excepting only that savoury flavourers are

used instead of sweet ones. For a quart of stock we should need a small piece of clean leek, a turnip, a carrot, a shalot, a clove of garlic, a piece of celery, a blade of mace, either the juice of two lemons and one tablespoonful of vinegar, or *vice versâ* (the first is the best), and a little salt. Clear the jelly in the usual way with the white and crushed shells of two eggs. The yolk may be added if liked. It makes the jelly darker. If they can be had, a few leaves of fresh tarragon and chervil may be dropped in to set with the jelly, and they will make it look very pretty. It is a good plan to boil the vegetables in water to extract their flavour, to make the jelly of the savoury liquid, and to introduce the other ingredients when clearing the stock. Garlic, mace, tarragon, etc., are exceedingly strong, and if not careful we may get more of their taste than is agreeable.

I told you how creams, blanc-manges, and preparations of that kind were made at our last lesson. Before closing now, however, I am strongly tempted to describe a very easy, inexpensive way of making jelly for every-day use which is exceedingly convenient for people who have not time to give to the more lengthy process, and who still like to have a dish of jelly occasionally to set off the table. I am quite aware that this is by no means an orthodox method, but the jelly made from it tastes well, and may serve a purpose. Procure one ounce and a half of Nelson's gelatine, apacket of Nelson's citric acid for jelly, and a pennyworth of saffron. Soak the gelatine in half a pint of cold water for three hours. Place it in a basin with as much lump sugar as will sweeten it pleasantly. It is not possible to say how much sugar should be used, because people's ideas differ so much about sweetness. Usually we allow a heaped tablespoonful of sugar for each lemon used ; therfore, the cook may try three tablespoonfuls of sugar, and thentaste it to ascertain if it is sweet enough. Pour on on pint and a quarter of boiling water, and stir till dissolved Soak the saffron beforehand in very little water, and add as much as will colour the jelly deeply. Add a wineglassful and a half of sherry to make up a quart of liquid. Stir in a little of the citric acid till the jelly tastes agreeably. As this is put in the jelly will become clear. Mould when almost cold.

I should imagine that jelly thus made has no nutritive value. It is simply convenient and agreeable. It must not be supposed that it will be as clear as properly made jelly; but it will be fairly clear, and, apart from the soaking of the gelatine and saffron, it will be made in five minutes.

XIX.

COOKERY FOR INVALIDS.

I REMEMBER once hearing of an old gentleman who went to visit at a house where there were three young ladies in the family. While he was there, the cook was taken ill, and it was thought advisable for her to have a little gruel. It turned out, however, that there was no one who could make it. The young ladies looked at each other with blank countenances. The housemaid prudently withdrew from the kitchen, and busied herself with brushes and brooms; but the gruel was not to be had, and the sick woman was obliged to put up with a cup of tea in its stead. The feelings of the old gentleman on the occasion are more easily imagined than described. He never forgot the occurrence. As long as he lived those unfortunate girls were associated in his mind with ignorance concerning gruel. When, after a time, one of them married, he regarded her husband with feelings of the deepest and most heartfelt pity.

The recovery of a patient very often largely depends upon the food which he takes; and as his power of taking food is affected very considerably by the way in which it is served and cooked, it is well worth while trying to learn how an invalid's food should be prepared.

Cookery for invalids is usually very plain and simple. All rich highly-spiced and fatty foods are entirely out of the question, and small delicate dishes, light foods, and cooling or nourishing drinks are needed more than anything else. Variety, too, is a great thing in invalid cookery. We all enjoy frequent change of food, and would grow weary of a dish that was set before us day

after day. How much more is this likely to be the case with invalids, whose appetite at the best is poor, and who have been rendered fastidious and fanciful through disease. The skill of a cook is shown quite as much in the readiness with which she can provide pleasant little surprises as in the delicacy of the food prepared.

Take, for example, the food which is perhaps more valuable and more frequently prepared for invalids than any other—beef-tea. When first supplied in cases of weakness beef-tea is usually taken with great relish. It seems to give strength and to supply just what is wanted, and a patient will look for it and enjoy it heartily. In a very short time, however, the appetite for it will fail, and the very name of beef-tea appears to excite loathing. In cases of this kind a nurse who is a clever cook will introduce a change of flavour ; present the beef-tea under another form, and avoid the *name* altogether.

A very agreeable variety may be made by using half beef and half mutton or veal in making the tea, or by stewing an inch or two of celery, or even an onion and one or two cloves with the beef. The addition of a little sago also, or crushed tapioca, and a small quantity of cream to the beef-tea will alter its taste, whilst the addition will increase rather than diminish the nourishing wholesome qualities of the tea. When making this, soak a tablespoonful of sago or tapioca in a little cold water for an hour. This will take away the earthy taste. Strain it and put it into a saucepan with a gill of fresh water, and boil gently till tender. Add a pint of good beef-tea, hot ; simmer this with the sago for a minute or two, then add a quarter of a pint of cream. Stir thoroughly, and serve. If liked, an egg or a couple of eggs may be added to the beef-tea as well as the cream. The eggs must be broken into a basin, and the specks must be carefully removed. The hot tea, with the cream or without it, should now be poured on gradually, *off the fire*, and stirred well that the eggs may be thoroughly broken up and separated. Beef-tea may also be used in savoury custard, such as is sometimes made for putting into clear soup. For this, take the yolks of two eggs and the white of one, beat them well, put with them a quarter of a pint of strong beef-tea, and season with a little salt. Butter a small jar or basin,

and pour in the custard. Tie some paper, slightly buttered, over the top, and set the basin in a saucepan containing boiling water which will reach half way up the basin, but which must on no account touch the edge of the paper. Set the saucepan by the side of the fire, and simmer very gently till the custard is set. It will take about twenty minutes. If the water is allowed to boil fast round the basin the custard inside will be full of holes, instead of being smooth and even. This custard may be served hot or cold.

Sometimes invalids who have a great distaste for ordinary beef-tea served hot, will enjoy it served cold, or offered as a jelly. Now, the best beef-tea, made from juicy meat, such as the roll of the blade-bone, and which has not been allowed to reach the boiling point, will not jelly when cold ; but beef-tea made by thoroughly stewing the shin of beef will jelly. Beef-tea jellies because of the gelatine which it contains. Gelatine is the least valuable part of butcher's meat, and it is obtained chiefly from bone and gristle. I do not recommend, therefore, that beef-tea should be made into a jelly because it will be more nourishing, but because it may prove more appetising. I have known invalids enjoy jelly beef-tea who turned away with loathing from liquid beef-tea.

Jelly (I do not mean now beef-tea jelly, but calf's-foot jelly, and isinglass or gelatine jelly) has fallen very much in the estimation of doctors and nurses of late years. I can remember that when I was a girl, calf's-foot jelly was the one article of nourishment that was supplied before all others in cases of weakness. If any member of a family was taken ill, the cousins and the aunts, but especially the aunts, used to come round at once with superlative moulds of jelly, as furnishing undoubted proof of sympathy and affection. We children used to regard it as one of the compensations attending indisposition, that we were allowed to have an unlimited supply of the same.

Of course calf's-foot jelly is a very different thing to gelatine jelly, but it is possible to estimate even calf's-foot jelly too highly. Jelly is very good when mixed with other substances, which are nourishing, but taken alone, it serves too often to satisfy the appetite without doing

much good. Gelatine jelly made from the gelatine sold in packets is of no use. Hear what Miss Nightingale says about it: "Jelly is an article of diet in great favour with nurses and friends of the sick. Even if it could be eaten solid it would not nourish; but it is simply folly to take one-eighth of an ounce of gelatine, and make it into a certain bulk by dissolving it in water, and then to give it to the sick, as if the mere bulk represented nourishment. It is now known that jelly does not nourish —that it has a tendency to produce diarrhœa; and to trust to it to repair the waste of a diseased constitution is simply to starve the sick under the guise of feeding them. If one hundred spoonfuls of jelly were given in the course of the day, you would have given one spoonful of gelatine, which spoonful has no nutritive power whatever."

We must return, however, to our beef-tea, for I want to write a word or two about the best way of making it. I said a little while ago that the roll of the blade-bone of beef was the best part that could be chosen for making beef-tea. I must not forget to add that the butcher should be asked to supply freshly-killed meat, for that will be more full of gravy than well-kept beef. To make good beef-tea, take one pound of meat, trim away all fat and skin, cut the lean into very small pieces; place these in a jar, pour over them one pint of cold water, and cover the jar closely; leave the meat to soak for one hour, stirring and pressing it now and then to draw out the juice. At the end of this time put the jar, still closely covered, into a saucepan with boiling water, which will come half way up, but which cannot touch the paper, if paper has been tied over as a cover. Keep the water boiling round the jar for two or even three hours, then pour the tea from the meat, add a little salt, and it is ready for use. Put it in a cool place till wanted, and warm a little as required, but do not keep the tea hot till wanted or it will spoil.

Mutton-tea or veal-tea may be made exactly in the same way as beef-tea.

Perhaps girls feel inclined to say, Why should we not put the beef at once into the saucepan, and never mind the trouble of putting it into a jar first? Because by

taking this extra trouble we make the beef-tea more digestible. People who are in a weakly condition need to have food that can be very easily digested. If the tea were to reach the boiling point, 212 deg., for even a second, the albumen contained in it would harden, and the tea would not be nearly so wholesome. Therefore we give great care to keep the tea from boiling, and we know that if we thus place it in a jar set in a saucepan of boiling water it never will boil, even if it remains on the fire all day, and so we are safe on that point. All we have to do is to keep putting more water into the saucepan, for fear it should boil away and leave the pan dry, for if this mischance should occur, our beef-tea would be burnt.

Perhaps some economical person feels inclined to ask, "Could we not make more beef-tea by putting in a quart instead of a pint of water?" Of course, you could put in a gallon of water if you liked, but, after all, it would only be so much more water, and it is the beef-juice that does good, not the water. If I wanted very strong beef-tea for very weak people I should put less water even than this; and in cases of exhaustion, when the patient could take very little food at a time, no water at all should be put with the meat. The simple gravy of the beef should be drawn out by steaming the meat in the way already described, but without water in the jar, and the juice thus drawn out would be the strongest beef-tea that could be made. The beef-juice or beef-essence, as it is called, is sometimes poured over a slice of crumb of bread freshly toasted, then seasoned with pepper and salt, and served on a hot dish; and this is an excellent dish for an invalid.

A good many poets have occupied themselves in singing the praises of sparkling wine. I wish some very clever one would take it into his head to sing in praise of good beef-tea. I am sure it deserves far more than wine to have its virtues told. Properly made, of fresh meat (not of somebody's extract), and taken, not instead of food, but in addition to food, I know of no more valuable restorative. It is particularly useful for bringing sleep to people who are overworked and overwrought, as so many are nowadays. Let such a one have a cup of beef-tea by the side of his bed, and take it, not the last thing at night,

but *in* the night when he wakes up, and finds Black Care sitting by the side of his pillow, and hears her say, "Now I have you in my power, sleep if you can." Beef-tea will chase away the demon. Let the victim drink it, and he will be very different from most people, if he does not lay his head on his pillow, and in less than half an hour fall asleep as quietly as when he was a baby, and his head lay on his mother's breast.

In cases of typhoid fever and some other diseases, doctors frequently give orders that raw beef-tea should be administered to the patient. This is made by drawing the juice of the meat out in cold water, as already described, then straining off at once and serving it uncooked. This must be made in small quantities, as it will not keep.

In making broth or beef-tea for sick people, great care should be taken to remove every particle of fat from the liquid, for fat will not only be likely to upset the stomach of the invalid, but it will prove most objectionable to him. If there is time for the tea to go cold, the fat will cake on the surface, and can be easily taken off. If, however, the tea is wanted at once, a sheet of clean blotting-paper should be passed lightly over the top of the liquid. The fat, being the lightest, will rise to the surface, and will be taken up first by the paper. The fat will rise more quickly if the jar containing the hot tea is set in a bowl of cold water.

Care, too, must be taken about seasoning the broth or tea. People who like highly-seasoned food in a general way, frequently object to it strongly when they are ill. It is wise, therefore, to season beef-tea or broth very slightly, and to place pepper and salt on the tray, and let the invalid season his food for himself, if able to do so.

We must not think that we have done everything that is wanted when we have made the tea or broth, seasoned it lightly, and removed the fat. A very great point in catering for sick folk is to make food *look* inviting. Every article used should of course be perfectly clean and bright, the tray should be covered with a spotless napkin, and if we can put on it a glass containing a few flowers as well as the food, all the better. Also we must remember not to take over much food up at one time, for this will be likely to set the invalid against it altogether.

Another point is worth remembering. As soon as the patient has eaten as much as he can, take the food quite out of the room, and when it is time for food again bring it in afresh, in a fresh basin with a clean spoon, having made a change in some way. Nothing is more likely to disgust an invalid than to have the food which he had left brought to him again and again, as if he were a naughty child, and must finish one portion before any more were given him. We should anticipate and consider the fancies of sick people. We want them to take nourishment and grow strong, and we know that a great deal is accomplished when food is enjoyed; therefore, anything we can do to this end is well worth the trouble.

Chicken broth used to be very highly thought of a few years ago, but it is not worth very much when all is said and done. It is strongest when the whole fowl is cut up, covered with cold water, boiled up, then drawn back and allowed to simmer gently for three hours, and strained for use. A little boiled rice, boiled barley, or chopped parsley can be added with the seasoning. This, however, is a painful way of making broth, because it is giving so much to produce so little. It is better to take the flesh from the bones, stew the latter for broth, then cook the meat separately, turning it either into panada or mince. Panada is very nourishing and very good, but the meat must be well pounded after it is cooked, or it will not be made the most of. The meat is cut up and stewed gently with a little good broth, not being allowed to reach the boiling point. It is then pounded to a pulp, pressed patiently through a sieve, seasoned with pepper and salt, and mixed with a spoonful or two of cream, and served. For variety's sake veal may be substituted for the chicken, and cooked in the same way. In either case a spoonful of barley may be soaked and boiled, pounded and pressed through the sieve with the meat. It will be a great improvement, but will be difficult to get through the sieve. Chicken mince is made by mincing the meat when raw, heating it gently in milk or good broth for a few minutes without allowing it to boil, then serving it immediately.

Cooling, refreshing, and soothing drinks are so much wanted by invalids that I must mention one or two

before closing. *Gruel.*—The world-renowned gruel may be made either with oatmeal or patent "grits." "Grits" are the best. Mix a tablespoonful of grits or oatmeal to a paste with a little cold water; add a pint of boiling water, boil the whole, gently stirring well for ten minutes. Sweeten with sugar or treacle, or season with salt and pepper, and serve. The gruel will be much better made with milk instead of water.—*Barley Water.* Wash two ounces of pearl barley, boil it for five minutes in clear water, then throw the water away. Pour on two quarts of boiling water, and boil gently till the liquid is reduced to half, or for about two hours. Flavour with sugar and lemon-juice, strain (or not, as preferred), and serve. If liked, a little lemon rind can be boiled with the barley. Stir the barley water before using it.—*Apple Barley Water.* Cut a good large apple wiped, but not peeled, into slices, and boil this with a little lemon-juice till soft. Rub it through a sieve, and add to it a quart of barley-water. —*Toast Water.* Take a thin slice of bread, and toast it thoroughly on both sides. Put it into a jug, pour a pint of boiling water over it, and let it stand till cold. Strain before using.—*Lemonade.* Roll two lemons on the table to make them soft. Cut the rind off very thinly, and be careful to reject the white pith, as that would make the lemonade bitter. Cut the lemons into slices, and put these free from pips into a jug with half the lemon rind and a pint and a half of boiling water. Cover till cold, strain, and serve. A very pleasant drink may be made by substituting oranges for lemons.—*A raw fresh egg*, beaten up with two tablespoonfuls of warm milk and a little sugar, is a very nourishing and agreeable drink for invalids. Sometimes wine is used instead of the milk; in this case a little water may be added, or a little soda-water may be taken instead.

When a doctor is attending a case, it is always well to consult him before offering any food to an invalid. It is a good plan, however, to think over beforehand two or three dishes which can be obtained and prepared without difficulty, then to suggest these to the medical man. A good doctor knows that "kitchen physic" will frequently do more good than drugs, and he will rejoice when he sees that this part of the medical treatment is not neglected.

XX.

COOKERY FOR THE POOR.

THERE is no class of the community which needs to be instructed in cookery so much as the very poor. If some of the well-to-do folks who grumble when their rump steak is not so tender as it should be, or when game is not sufficiently high, were compelled to live for a week on food which thousands of their fellow countrymen eat with relish, they would be, to say the least of it, astonished. Not only is it true that one half of the world has no idea how the other half lives, but a small portion of the population has no conception how thousands and tens of thousands of those who reside within a stone's throw of their homes live.

A good many intellectual, highly cultured people have a sort of mild scorn for cookery, although I have noticed that they rarely object to partake of the results thereof. Let cooks, however, be comforted, for their work is honourable and useful. Cookery is a larger question than these clever gentlemen imagine, for it has to do with morality. There is an old proverb which says, "Those who drink beer think beer." Whether this be so or not I cannot say, but I am quite sure that those who have been made bilious and dyspeptic by eating coarse, indigestible food, which has been badly cooked, are much more likely to commit all sorts of horrible crimes and to seek comfort in strong drink, than are those who have good wholesome food cooked in such a way that it is made not only palatable, but digestible.

A large number of those who "take to drinking," as it is called, begin to go wrong by taking beer as a substitute for food. They feel exhausted, there is no food "handy," and so they take a draught of beer, and this quickly revives them. The experience is repeated, they gradually acquire the habit of relying on beer, and go from bad to

worse. If it could have been that, when this "sinking at the pit of the stomach," as they call it, was felt, some true friend had given them a cupful of good beef tea, or a cupful of coffee to drink instead of the beer, they would have felt better almost as quickly, and no harm would have been done. Unfortunately, however, beer is always to be had, and beef-tea is a rarity, and so the mischief is done.

I am not going to advocate teetotalism here. It is not my place to do so, for cookery is my subject now, not the drinking habits of the community. Perhaps, however, I may be allowed to say one thing—it is that *people should never take stimulants without food, or immediately before taking food.* Let them relieve the feeling of exhaustion by *eating*, not by *drinking*, and afterwards take the beer or wine, if they must have it. If everybody would follow this simple rule, drunkenness would very soon be almost unknown among us.

Yet how usual it is for people of all sorts and conditions to take a glass of beer or wine when tired, and spoil their appetite on that. I have again and again heard cooks—for example, when hot and weary with preparing food for others—say, "Give me a class of beer—I am ready to drop;" and when the beer was finished they have not much cared to eat. It is conduct like this which leads to drunkenness. Many poor women are accustomed to drink beer when exhausted, and when they do not drink beer, drink tea, and that is almost as bad, only it acts in a different way. How many poor women there are—sempstresses and others—who sit still to their work, who take tea for their dinner! Tea and coffee are both very excellent indeed in their right places, and no one appreciates them more than I do; but they do not constitute nourishing food, and people who try to live on them are simply starving themselves by inches.

Beer and tea are both taken because they are convenient, and it is troublesome to prepare good food. Yet I fear that in many cases these poor women would not know how to cook the food even if it were at hand. It would be true charity if those who have an opportunity would teach the very poor how to cook.

There are a great many clever managing women

amongst the poor who cook very well, and who are willing to prepare good food for their families. All honour to these virtuous ones! They have no place in storied page, but they are doing their life's work nobly, and they will have their reward in seeing their children grow up healthy, and in knowing that their husbands are steady and respectable. Perhaps you say cookery is all very well, but it is not everything. A woman may be a good cook, and yet keep a miserable home. That is true, and such cases occur, but they are not common. The likelihood is, that if a woman is clever and energetic enough to provide wholesome, well-cooked food on very small means, she can, and does, do a great deal more. I should quite expect that such a woman's home would be clean and well-kept, her children would be tidily if poorly dressed, and her husband would go about with his head in the air, feeling conscious that there never was such a clever manager as his "missus."

These clever women are, unfortunately, rarely met with. The majority of poor women know little about cookery, and care less. Moreover, they will not be taught. You can scarcely offend the ordinary working woman more than by hinting that the red herring which she gives to her baby is not exactly all that a baby requires. You may speak to these women on religious subjects and they will listen quietly, very likely regarding the sermon as a prelude to the alms which is to follow; but talk to them about getting dinner ready, or keeping the house clean, and you have the fat in the fire in no time.

Even where working women can be persuaded to learn cookery, it is not much use to tell them about foods to which they are not accustomed. Lentils, haricot beans, and macaroni are nourishing and cheap foods, but they are very little used by the working classes. Even oatmeal is not valued as it deserves to be. There has been a great deal said of late years about the value of lentils, and they are much more used than they once were, but it is not the very poor who use them. It is the middle class who are, as a rule, willing to receive new ideas, and who are anxious to learn all they can about domestic management. If we go into the poor districts, and notice the food which is offered for sale (for that is the food which is eaten), we

see black puddings, small savoury pies, pigs' and sheep's heads, liver, lights, hearts, pigs' feet, cows' heels, tripe, including "reed" tripe, chitterlings, cheap fish, including mussels, whelks, cockles, etc., also we see plenty of treacle and bread, but we hardly ever see lentils, haricot beans, or maize; yet district visitors and charitable people have tried their best to make lentils popular—and, so far, without success.

I will confess that if I were to speak my real mind, I should say that the taste for lentils was an acquired one, and that though lentils constitute a most valuable article of diet, unlimited lentils may become monotonous. Yet even I should prefer lentils to lights. However, these are the facts of the case; and it seems to me that if cookery teachers are to do any good, they must first teach people how to cook well food which they have a prejudice for, and so by gradually giving them an idea of what properly-prepared food is, they may be led to try foods which are new to them. Enlightened ideas about cookery, like enlightened ideas about all other branches of knowledge, lead people to avoid grooves. The unfortunate part of the business is, that at present the prejudices of the very poor are in favour of foods many of which are almost worthless from a nourishing point of view. If only it could be that our poor friends would lay out their money more judiciously, and pay more attention to the cooking of the food, they might, for the same amount as they spend now, have food which would build up their bodies and give them strength for the hard battle which life is to so many of them.

As, therefore, it is likely that this paper will be read not so much by the very poor as by those who wish to benefit the very poor, I will give a few recipes for properly cooking the better sorts of food which the poor are in the habit of using, and also for cooking food which it would be well if they would use.

Ox-Cheek Stew.—Ox-cheek and cow-heel are favourite articles of food, and deservedly so. A stew made from the following recipe will be wholesome, delicious, and will cost very little. The cow-heel may probably be bought for fourpence, and the cheek for threepence or fourpence

per pound. A stew made of two pounds of cheek and one heel will furnish two or three nourishing dinners for a small family. Wash the ox-cheek thoroughly, dry it in a cloth, cut it into inch squares, mix a tablespoonful of flour, a teaspoonful of pepper, and the same of salt, and roll the squares in the mixture. Cut the cow-heel also into pieces, and keep them separate. Slice two onions in rings. Melt a good slice of dripping in a saucepan, put in the pieces of floured beef, and fry them a good brown, being careful that they do not stick to the pan. Take up the beef, and fry the onion rings in the same fat; on no account allow them to brown. Add three carrots cut up into slices, and a halfpennyworth of mixed herbs; pour on two pints and a half of cold water, cover the saucepan closely, let it boil, draw it to the side of the fire and simmer it gently, skimming it occasionally for at least three hours. Taste it, and if necessary, add a little more salt and pepper, pour it into a tureen, and it is ready to serve. The bones of the heel may be stewed again for soup.

Cow-heel with Parsley Sauce.—Wash the heel well, cut it into small pieces, then put it in a saucepan with as much cold water as will cover it. Let it stew very gently till the bones can be drawn out, which will be in about four hours. Put the meat on a dish, season with pepper and salt, pour a little parsley sauce or onion sauce over, and it is ready, and will be found excellent. If liked, and where there are children in the family, the heel can be stewed in a quart of milk instead of cold water to cover. This milk, when poured off, may be sweetened and flavoured, and will make jelly; and the pieces of meat may still be served, with sauce over them, for dinner. If milk is used, the jar should be greased before the meat is put in.

Pig's Fry, or Poor Man's Goose.—Procure a perfectly fresh pig's fry. This will cost about sixpence per pound, and one pound will make a good dinner for four or five people. Wash the fry well, and cut it into small pieces. Brush and wash three pounds of potatoes, and parboil them—that is, put them into a saucepan with cold water to cover them, and let the water boil. Take the potatoes up, skim them, and cut them into slices. Peel an onion, and mix it with three sage leaves which have been finely

chopped. Grease a pie-dish, and fill it with alternate layers of sliced potatoes and fry, remembering that potatoes must form the first and last layers, and that a little of the savoury mixture, with pepper and salt, must be sprinkled over each layer of fry. Fill the dish with water for gravy, cover it with the thin skin of the fry, or, wanting this, with greased paper, and bake in a moderate oven for about an hour, or, if more convenient, gently stew it in a saucepan.

Stewed Giblets.—Giblets are very delicious and nourishing if well stewed, and a good dishful, sufficient to make a dinner for a small family, may frequently be bought on Saturday evenings for threepence or fourpence. It must, however, be remembered that the giblets require to be thoroughly stewed, and also that they will not keep. Wash them thoroughly in two or three waters. Skin the necks, and cut them into small portions, cut through the top skin of the gizzard and clean it well, divide the heart and liver into halves, and remember not to break the gall bag of the liver, because gall is very bitter. Scald the claws and legs by throwing them into boiling water, then remove the skin. Be sure to use the feet, as they are rich in jelly. Put the gizzards and feet into a stewpan with water to cover, and stew for three-quarters of an hour; add the rest of the giblets, which have been rolled in flour, with two onions, each stuck with a clove, a large carrot sliced, a bunch of herbs, and a little pepper and salt. Stew for an hour and a half longer, and serve very hot.

Stewed Meat.—Take a pound of scraps of meat. Fry these in dripping till brown, and also two onions, two carrots, and two turnips cut up small. Put both meat and vegetables into a saucepan, cover with water which has been thickened with a little flour, add pepper and salt, and simmer gently with the lid on the pan for an hour, or longer if the meat is tough. If liked, potatoes, cut into quarters, and onions can be stewed with the gravy. Serve very hot.

Stewed Scraps of Meat with Onions.—Grease a stewpan thickly with dripping, cover the bottom with a layer of onions, put a layer of meat on this with pepper and salt, and repeat until all is used. Cover the saucepan closely, and stew very gently for an hour and a half. The water

which is in the onions will make plenty of gravy. Onions are nourishing and wholesome, and constitute a valuable article of food.

These pieces of meat will make an excellent pie or pudding. A little piece of beef skirting will help to make gravy.

Thus far I have spoken of stews only. Stewing is the most economical mode of cookery which we know. I think it was poor Richard who used to say that he who roasted his meat threw half of it into the fire; he who boiled it threw half of it in the water; he who stewed it made the most of it. This is nothing but fact. Stewing is profitable for many reasons. For one thing, it has to be done gently, and therefore a small amount of fuel suffices for it. Many a clever house-mother has provided a stew for next day's dinner by preparing it beforehand, leaving a few cinders in the range and letting the food simmer during the night. Coarse, cheap meat can be rendered tender and succulent by long and careful stewing. The process can be carried on, too, in more ways than one. If there is an oven attached to the range, the stewing can be done then in a jar with a closely-fitting lid, or a cover of greased paper. If, unfortunately, there is no oven, this same jar can be placed on the hob at the side of the fire, or it may be put on the hearth in front of the fire. Or, supposing a poor woman has to go out and leave her cooking operations, she may "rake" her fire, put the jar containing the stew in a saucepan, and surround it with boiling water, and it will go on gently simmering all the time she is away. When once working women learn to appreciate the advantages of stewing, half their difficulties will be over. At present, however, they are too fond of the frying-pan to value the stewpan as it deserves.

Scouse.—This name is in some places given to a stew made of scraps of meat and bones broken up, which is sold in the market places of various towns at so much per cup. To make scouse take cooked or uncooked scraps of meat, whichever can be obtained, cut them into very small pieces, and put them into a stew-pan with the bones chopped, pepper and salt, a good quantity of sliced onions,

double the quantity of raw potatoes, and cold water to cover. Simmer gently for about three hours, remove the bones, and serve the scouse very hot. The potatoes should be reduced to pulp. This is, perhaps, the most profitable way of using up cold meat and bones which can be adopted.

A Scrag of Mutton stewed gently for three hours or more in three pints of water is an excellent dish. A cupful of rice or pearl barley should be washed separately and thrown into the water when it boils. The liquor will make excellent broth, and the mutton will be tender and good. If barley is used for this, dish the broth, which should be used quickly, as it will soon go sour.

Toad-in-the-Hole.—I have in a former paper given a recipe for toad-in-the-hole, but this one is less expensive than that. Buy a pound of meat pieces, such as are sold by the butcher for from 5d. to 7d. per lb., according to the locality. These pieces consist of the trimmings from large joints, and are often of excellent quality. If they are not to be had, the short bones of a neck of mutton or a pound of beef skirting may be used instead. Many people use sausages for the purpose, but cheap sausages are not to be recommended. Put six ounces of flour into a bowl with a little salt; break an egg into this and beat thoroughly, adding a spoonful or two of water to make a smooth paste. Stir in a little less than a pint of milk. Grease a pie-dish, arrange the pieces of meat in it, season them with pepper and salt, pour the batter over, and bake for one hour.

FISH constitutes nourishing and wholesome food; some sorts, such as plaice, flounders, conger eel, ling, hake, haddock, mackerel, etc., are very cheap, and we hope that in the course of a year or two they will be cheaper still. Cod's heads also are frequently sold for twopence each. and excellent picking may be obtained from them. Here are two or three recipes for cooking fish :—

Stewed Fish.—Take any kind of white fish. Wash it quickly and dry it; then cut it into two inch-squares. Put it into boiling water to cover it; bring it to the boil,

draw it back, and let it simmer gently for a few minutes, till it is done. Take up the fish and thicken the water in which it was boiled by adding to it a tablespoonful of flour, mixed smoothly with a gill of milk to each pint of water. Stir the sauce till it boils; add a slice of butter or dripping, and keep boiling for ten minutes. Put in the fish, let it get hot once more, and turn the whole into a dish. Eat with vinegar and pepper.

Fish Pie.—Take fish, prepared as above; remove the skin and bones, and tear the flesh into flakes. Measure it, and mix it with an equal quantity of cold mashed potatoes, a little dripping, pepper and salt. Put the mixture into a well-greased pie-dish, place a little dripping on the top, and make hot in an oven. If liked, cold boiled rice may be used instead of potatoes; or the potatoes and fish can be placed in layers in a well-greased pie-dish and baked.

Baked Fish.—Hake and conger eel, both excellent fish, may, when they are to be had at all, be bought very cheap—at about twopence per pound. Prepared as follows they will furnish a delicious dinner. Flat fish may be cooked in the same way. Clean the fish; if it is flat, divide it through the bones; if round, cut it into slices. Melt a good slice of dripping in a tin baking-dish; arrange the fish in this; pour over it about two tablespoonfuls of water mixed with a little vinegar, sprinkle on the top a seasoning mixture composed of a small onion, boiled and chopped, bread-crumbs, pepper and salt. Put pieces of dripping here and there upon the fish, and bake till the flesh leaves the bones easily. Time according to thickness. If a piece of hake, cod, or conger eel can be obtained, and a wire stand (to be bought for a penny) to raise the fish above the tin, is at hand, the fish may be laid upon the stand, the vinegar and water may be poured underneath, and sliced turnips, sliced onions, or sliced potatoes may be put in the tin. The fish can then be baked gently and basted frequently for about an hour. When half cooked the fish should be turned, that it may be equally cooked all over.

Herrings, both fresh and salt, are largely consumed by the poor, as are also haddocks fresh and dried. It is

scarcely necessary to say how dried and salt fish should be cooked. Fresh herrings are excellent when opened, emptied, boned, seasoned and rolled, put into a pie-dish with vinegar and water, and baked for three-quarters of an hour. A few potatoes baked in a jar with herrings thus pickled form a most appetising dish.

Good soup is wholesome and nourishing, but it is not so much made or used as it deserves to be. The following is Mrs. Buckton's recipe for an excellent vegetable soup. Put a quart of water into a saucepan, and while it boils prepare the vegetables by cleaning and cutting into small dice an onion and a lettuce. Throw these into boiling water, with two ounces of green pease, and two potatoes cooked or uncooked. Mix a tablespoonful of flour or oatmeal with two ounces of dripping, add this to the soup, with pepper, salt, and a pinch of sugar. Simmer gently for nearly an hour, mix with half a pint of boiling milk, and serve with sippets of bread. If liked, carrots or dried pease can be substituted for the green pease, but dried pease will need to boil for two hours or more.

Very excellent soup can be made of scraps and bones, cooked and uncooked, skin, trimmings of vegetables (not cabbage), etc. No remnant of good food is too small or insignificant to be put into the "stock pot," that is, the pot or saucepan employed in making the stock for soup. Scraps put into the stock pot may be covered with cold water, and stewed until every particle of goodness has been extracted from them ; and excellent nourishing soup may be made of the liquor thus obtained. If you will refer to page 62 of this book you will find a recipe for making soup from bones. The French are celebrated for their soups. The stock pot used by them is a glazed earthenware pipkin, while the English stock pot is usually an iron saucepan. Stock made in an earthenware vessel may be allowed to cool in the pot ; stock made in a metal saucepan will taste unpleasantly if left to cool in the pan in which it was made. The stock made from bones will keep better if made without vegetables. It will not taste pleasantly until vegetables and herbs have been added to it, and then it may be thickened with oatmeal, barley, pea-meal, bread, etc., a little milk also is a valuable addition. Thus thickened it

will supply nourishing and wholesome food. An iron stock pot should be emptied and cleansed thoroughly every day. If the English poor could get into the way of stewing scraps and bones (often to be obtained easily), and would make soup of the liquor, they would have many a nourishing meal where now they want one.

Scrap Pie.—Put a pound or more of lean cooked or uncooked scraps of meat (beef or mutton, or both), into a saucepan with carrots, turnips, onions, and a couple of potatoes cut into slices. Season with pepper and salt, and pour on cold water to barely cover the meat. Bring the water to a boil, and lay on the top of the meat, etc., a stiff crust made of suet or dripping, which has been rolled to fit the saucepan. Put the lid on the pan, and simmer gently for an hour and a half. Pass the knife round the crust every now and then to keep it from burning, and serve with the meat and vegetables on a dish, and the suet crust cut into quarters and laid upon it. If meat cannot be obtained, this pie may be made of vegetables alone.

Porridge can scarcely be too highly recommended as nourishing food. The Scotch, who are a hardy race, almost live upon it. Yet it is scarcely worth while to give directions for making it, for those who appreciate its value will not need the recipe, and those who do not will scarcely be induced to try it. Perhaps I may be allowed to remind my friends that one pound of oatmeal, ground pease, haricot beans, and semolina will give a man as much strength as three pounds of lean meat. The following is the ordinary method of making porridge :—Boil a little water and add a pinch of salt. Sprinkle a little oatmeal into boiling water, and beat vigorously with a wooden spoon or knife till the required thickness is obtained. Boil for a few minutes longer, still stirring the preparation briskly, pour the porridge out, let it stand a few minutes, and eat with treacle or sugar and milk.

Superior Porridge.—Soak a heaped tablespoonful of coarse oatmeal in a pint of water overnight. In the morning put the saucepan with the oatmeal and water on the fire and let it boil, stirring it occasionally to prevent

burning, till wanted. It may be eaten in twenty minutes, but will be improved by long boiling.

Broken bread is frequently given to the poor, and a great scandal is created because they throw it away instead of using it. Very often, however, they do not know what to do with it. An excellent pudding of broken bread may be made by pouring boiling water upon the pieces, letting them soak for a while, then draining them, and beating them up with a good slice of dripping, some coarse sugar, currants, and nutmeg. The mixture thus prepared may be turned into a greased pie-dish, and baked in a well-heated oven till it is brightly browned on the top. It may be eaten hot or cold.

Children's Cheap Pudding.—Stew a little cheap fruit of any kind, sweeten it, and spread it upon broken bread, pour cold milk over, and let the bread soak for a while. Children will eat this pudding with great relish.

Few dishes are more nourishing than peas, lentils, or haricots made into soup. The process in all cases is the same. Soak the beans, then draw off the water, and boil them in three times their bulk of fresh water till soft. They will take three hours or more, and a little dripping should be thrown into the water with them. Flavour the soup as convenient, rub it through a colander to keep back the skins, which are not easy of digestion, and serve very hot. A crust of bread boiled with soup is a great improvement; and, when it can be procured, greasy stock in which fat meat has been boiled should be used instead of water to make the soup.

An excellent supper for a working man can be made from cheese and rice. Cheese, it will be remembered, is more nourishing than meat, and can generally be digested without difficulty by those who work in the open air. Take a quarter of a pound of rice, put it into a saucepan with cold water to cover it, and bring it to the boil. Drain it, and put it back into the saucepan with three-quarters of a pint of milk and a little pepper and salt, and boil it gently till tender and rather dry. Grate a little cheese finely (dry, stale cheese will answer for this purpose if it is not hard); place alternate layers of boiled rice and

grated cheese in a greased dish, and let cheese be the uppermost layer; put little pieces of dripping here and there upon the top, and brown in the oven. Serve hot.

Lentils or haricot beans may be soaked and boiled till soft, then eaten either as a vegetable or as a substitute for meat. They are excellent prepared as follows:

Haricot Beans.—Boil the haricots till tender, and drain them. Mince a small onion finely, toss it over the fire, and mix the beans with it. Serve hot.

Lentils.—Boil the lentils till tender, and drain them. Melt a slice of dripping in a saucepan, and throw in an onion finely chopped. Stir in a teaspoonful of flour, and add a little of the water in which the lentils were boiled to make a thick sauce, with half a teaspoonful of vinegar if liked. Put in the lentils, and let them simmer softly for a few minutes. Serve hot.

I have thus named a few out of the many dishes which might be mentioned, which cost little, and yet are wholesome and nourishing. We must not forget, however, that the poor have frequently to contend with an insurmountable difficulty in their cookery, and that is scarcity of fuel. How can those who have very little coal, and perhaps no oven into the bargain, prepare their food properly? It is very easy for us who have every needful appliance and utensil to say what others should do; yet very likely if we were in the place of these poor creatures we should not do nearly so well as they do. Let us, therefore, while trying to help our poorer brothers and sisters, be very charitable in our judgment of them, and remember who it was who said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

XXI.

HOW TO MAKE TEA AND COFFEE.

TEA can be made rightly nowhere but in the British Islands. Perfectly—it can be made in no house but mine, and by no person but myself.

This is the opinion held by a great many modern British housewives. They do not express it in so many words, but they hold it most tenaciously. You may tell them that the Chinese and the Russians imagine that they also can make the beverage in question, but the ladies will regard this as a sign of ignorance in the poor deluded foreigners which has been foolishly pandered to by travellers. You may deal out a side stroke, and inform them that though they make tea, they cannot make coffee. This point they will yield, and admit that if those who profess to know speak truly, the French can make coffee better than they; but what is coffee? It is on tea that they stake their reputation; and they judge of the intellectual and moral qualities of every visitor who comes to the house by the extent of his or her appreciation of their children and their tea.

If these ladies are made happy—and, above all, if they are led to maintain their present high standard of excellence by this inner consciousness of skill—I cannot say that I see any harm in it. They can make a good cup of tea. There is no doubt of that. I make fun of them here, but I assure you I should not do so if I were in their presence. I should accept their tea with gratitude; and I should be most effusive in my expression of appreciation of it. I should also inquire with profound humility by what process this wondrous result had been attained. As the process was described, I should note carefully whether it differed from my own in any particular. If it did, I should remark to myself, with deep satisfaction, that my friend did not know everything: she had to learn one or two things yet.

For now I will confess it—I also am a British matron. I really do know how to make tea. Let those, therefore, who wish to learn *the* one perfect way in which tea should be made listen to me.

It is very easy to make good tea if only people will take the trouble to attend to two or three little details concerning it. First, there is the tea itself. If this is not good of its kind, we may give up our attempts at once, for we shall never succeed in producing the fragrant, agreeable, mildly stimulating and cheering beverage which all Englishwomen love, and the majority of brain workers rely upon. For tea has had its triumphs, and "has been honoured among beverages." Hawthorne called it "an angel's gift;" Miss Mitford said she could lie awake all night drinking it; De Quincy, who used to drink it from eight o'clock in the evening till four in the morning, wished he could produce it from "an eternal teapot." Last but not least, during the conflict recently waged in Egypt, the British troops were led on to victory on tea. If you read your newspapers, you will remember that when the final march on Tel-el-Kebir was made, each soldier was provided with a quantity of ammunition, two days' rations, and a *water-bottle filled with tea.* A few years ago those bottles would have been filled with rum, but Sir Garnet Wolseley is a wise man. He believes not in rum, but in tea.

A good cup of tea can never be obtained from the cheap, inferior, adulterated teas which are sold at "a tremendous sacrifice," and which it has been proved, consist in some cases of leaves which have been already used, dried and rolled into shape, or of tea dust which has been mixed with clay and other substances, and manipulated into the form of the leaf. True, there are genuine "clean" teas of full body, though not of very delicate flavour, to be had at a low price, but very cheap teas are not to be recommended. Of course, if people have accustomed themselves to drink beer as an accompaniment to raw onions and red herrings, they may rejoice in Saryune Congou also; but we should scarcely say that they were experienced tea-drinkers. In this case, as in all others, a good article will command its market value, and if we try to get it for less than it is worth, we

walk deliberately into a trap prepared for the ignorant and the unreasonable.

What, then, are we to do? We may be able to appreciate a cup of good tea when it is made, yet not be able to select it judiciously. Our course lies clear before us—we must purchase the tea of a respectable dealer who has a reputation to maintain, and who will not for his own sake supply us with an inferior or adulterated article.

Given, then, the respectable dealer, what variety of tea should we ask him to supply us with? This must depend on individual taste. Some people have a preference for one kind of tea only; others believe that flavour and body are best obtained from a suitable mixture. I incline to the latter opinion; moreover, I like to mix the varieties myself. To buy tea already mixed calls for the exercise of more trust in a very worthy class of the community than I possess.

The finest green tea is the purest tea obtainable in this country, and it is also the sort most liable to adulteration. Green tea is scarcely ever used alone, and its use at all is much less frequent now than formerly. The usual proportion for a mixture of black and green tea is four or six parts of black to one of green tea. When taken strong, green tea is most injurious.

As a guide to those who are in doubt as to the variety of black tea to be chosen, I quote the following passage taken from Dr. Edward Smith's work on *Foods*: "Of black teas Congou should be preferred for economy, and also as a foundation for a mixed tea. A higher class of tea for ordinary use may be composed of three parts of Congou and one part of Assam or Oolong; whilst for the best kinds, a mixture may be made of one part of Kaisow and three of fine Souchong; or of two parts of Kaisow, three of Souchong, and one of Oolong orange-flavoured Pekoe, or fine Assam; or equal parts of Souchong, Kaisow, or flowery Pekoe may be taken.

For my own part I may say that for many years I have used the following mixture, which I have found both excellent and moderate in price; one pound of Moning Congou, a quarter of a pound of Assam, and a quarter of a pound of Orange Pekoe. Here the Moning Congou supplies the body, the Assam the flavour, and the Pekoe

the aroma. I am quite aware that this mixture would be pronounced by old ladies living in the country too "yarby," or herby. This is a matter of taste. If this objection is raised, it would be very easy to decrease the proportion of Pekoe, substituting a larger portion of Assam if this were allowed. Many grocers mix Moning and Kaisow, and thus furnish an excellent tea. Whatever kind of tea is selected should be closely rolled, and should not contain much stalk.

One detail should be borne in mind by all who mix tea for themselves. It is that the different varieties should be mixed and put into the canister a few days before using, in order that the flavours may blend together perfectly. It is perhaps scarcely necessary to remind housekeepers that tea should be kept either in tin canisters or in wooden boxes lined with lead sheeting. The box or canister should be closely covered to prevent the escape of the aroma.

Next to the tea comes the teapot. I believe many skilful tea-makers are of opinion that an earthenware teapot is to be preferred to a silver or metal one. With this opinion I cannot agree. I think that tea yields its strength and flavour more readily in a metal than in an earthenware vessel, and the only advantage connected with the use of earthenware is that it can be more easily cleaned than the other. It goes without saying that good tea cannot be made in a dirty teapot, but I see no reason why a metal pot should not be kept in good condition. Each time tea is made the leaves should be emptied out as soon as done with, the teapot rinsed with clean boiling water, and dried thoroughly inside as well as outside. Before the tea is made a little boiling water should be poured into the pot to heat it, then poured off, when the quantity of tea required ("a teaspoonful for each person, and one for the pot") may be put in. Pour over from half to three-quarters of a pint of boiling water, close the lid, put the pot in a warm place, cover it with the indispensable cosy, and leave the tea to brew; then fill the pot with boiling water, and it is ready.

There is a diversity of opinion as to the length of time needed for drawing tea. I have been told that the Chinese do not allow it to brew at all. They use plenty

of tea, pour boiling water on, and draw it off immediately. It is to be presumed that they can procure it more easily than we, and so do not need to study economy. It is, however, a mistake to suppose that all tea should alike brew for ten minutes before the pot is filled with water. Tea of fine quality may stand for ten minutes or longer with advantage, but coarse common tea should not stand more than five minutes, or the infusion will be bitter instead of being fragrant. The longer the tea brews the more *theine* is extracted from it; and theine is the injurious part of tea. It is said that tea which has been long brewed is more likely to induce sleeplessness than is tea which has not long been made.

Everyone knows that "unless the kettle boiling be, filling the teapot spoils the tea." Not everyone knows, however, that if tea is to be enjoyed in perfection it is necessary that the water should be freshly boiled. Water which has been in the kettle all the afternoon is quite unfit for making tea, and if such water be employed the lively aromatic flavour of the most superior tea will be destroyed. Tea tasters are most particular to use only water which has been newly boiled.

Many people have a prejudice in favour of putting a little carbonate of soda into the pot to help the tea to draw. If the water is exceedingly hard this is allowable, but otherwise the practice is not at all permissible. Soda makes tea black and bitter, but it quite destroys fragrance and flavour. If blackness, irrespective of flavour, is wanted, why not buy Saryune Congou at once, and you can have it at a cheap rate? There is no occasion to spoil good tea in order to obtain it.

If in pouring out tea it is found that additional tea will be needed, by no means put fresh leaves upon the old ones, but either empty the old leaves out entirely and make fresh tea altogether, or brew a little tea separately in a teacup, and turn this into the pot when the leaves have yielded their strength. The lukewarm water in the teapot will not draw the goodness out of the fresh tea, and unless made separately, the latter will be wasted. The presiding genius of the tea-table should also remember that so long as additional water is likely to be required, the tea should never be quite drained from the leaves.

In Russia it is usual to drink tea with lemon-juice, instead of milk or cream. The taste for tea thus prepared is one which I, for one, have not yet acquired. In England, sugar, with milk or cream, are the usual additions to the fragrant beverage.

Even at this point there is a little detail which is worth attending to. The sugar and milk will be more perfectly blended with the tea if they are both put in before the tea, instead of after it. Perhaps you think this is fancy on my part; but try both ways, and see if I am not right.

So much for the right way of making tea. We now come to coffee.

So far I have had the feeling that I was addressing critical readers who were disposed to challenge the correctness of every word, and who thought they knew quite as much as I about the right way of making tea. Now, however, I assume a different attitude. If my readers (excepting perhaps an occasional one here and there) are not humble minded and abashed they ought to be so, for though English people may make tea properly, they cannot make coffee, and it is quite a rare thing to find coffee in England that is fit to drink. Nevertheless, if you have good materials and proper utensils, it is exceedingly easy to make good coffee. The materials are freshly-roasted coffee berries, bought whole; the utensils are a coffee-mill for grinding the berries (just before they are to be used, and not earlier) and a tin cafetière, such as is to be bought of any size at every ironmonger's. With this cafetière you can, without difficulty, make delicious French coffee; without the cafetière, you can make English coffee of varying excellence, and that is all.

It is not often that I say that particular utensils are required to produce particular results. I am sure that all who know me well will acknowledge that I am always ready to save expense, and that I continually advocate economy. I know quite well that it is "bad workmen who quarrel with their tools," and I have a great admiration for the historical cook who made a baking sheet out of an old iron tray, and a fish fryer out of a worn out wire sieve; but I maintain that if you want to make real

French coffee, you must have either an ordinary cafetière, or a cafetière l'excellente.

Of course, good, wholesome, agreeable English coffee can be made with the coffee-pot usually found in English kitchens; and as thousands possess the one who will never think of purchasing the other, I will first describe how good English coffee should be made with the coffee pot we all know so well. I will then show how the cafetière should be used, arriving lastly at the superlative degree of excellence in the cafetière l'excellente.

All coffee should be freshly roasted and freshly ground if it is to yield its full aroma. A machine can be bought for roasting coffee at home; but as few housekeepers would care for the trouble of this, it should be remembered that coffee should be bought in small quantities at a time: that care should be taken to have it freshly roasted; that it should be kept in a closely-covered tin; that it should be heated in the oven for a few minutes before being ground, and that no more should be ground at one time than is needed for one supply. Whatever kind of coffee is used, these details should be observed with regard to the coffee. Also I may add that Mocha coffee is the best, and that small berries are to be preferred.

Many people mix chicory with their coffee. There is at the present time a preparation sold under the name of coffee, which consists of nothing but chicory and burnt sugar. Chicory is harmless, I believe; it gives colour and a certain body to coffee, and thus is an economical addition to the coffee-pot; but it is not coffee, and people who make a practice of using it have probably no idea of what real coffee is. The proportions of chicory and coffee usually taken are a quarter of a pound of chicory to one pound of coffee.

The white and shell of an egg are sometimes mixed with ground coffee in order to "clear" the solution. If eggs are allowed, they answer their purpose excellently, and should be mixed with the ground coffee before the boiling water is poured on. They can, however, be dispensed with.

There is a good deal of difference of opinion about the quantity of coffee which should be used in making the beverage. This must, of course, vary with the degree of

strength required. Thrifty housekeepers who consider strong coffee injurious, declare that a teaspoonful of coffee is sufficient for half a pint of water. Ordinary individuals will, however, in all probability prefer to drink coffee made with a heaped tablespoonful of coffee to the half pint of water. If *café au lait*, or three parts coffee and one part milk is wanted, only half the above measure of water should be used, and the coffee (which will then be strong) should be weakened with milk, but never with water. If coffee and chicory are preferred, three tablespoonfuls of the mixture will be needed for a pint of water.

Whatever the quantity may be, put the coffee into the coffee-pot, and pour over it the requisite measure of *boiling* water. Let it stand a minute or two, then put it back on the fire, and bring it gently to the boil. Take it off, pour out a cupful, and return it to the pot from a good height. Repeat this operation twice. Throw a tablespoonful of cold water into the coffee, let the pot stand by the side of the fire for three or four minutes, then strain the liquid through muslin into the heated vessel from which it is to be served, and send it at once to table.

Now for making coffee with the *cafetière*. On no account stint the coffee. French people always use plenty of the fragrant powder. An ounce of coffee to a breakfast-cupful of water will be about right.

First fill the cafetière with boiling water, let it stand a minute or two, then pour it out. Put the coffee (heated in the oven, and freshly ground, remember : these details are important) upon the perforated bottom of the upper compartment ; press this down with the piston, and put the strainer on the top ; then pour on gently and gradually as much boiling water as is required. Put the cover over the spout of the cafetière to keep in the steam and fragrance ; or, if this is wanting, fill the end of the spout with soft paper to prevent their escape. Cover the cafetière and leave it in a hot place for a few minutes, and when the coffee has drained from the upper compartment into the lower one the coffee is ready for use. There is no difficulty here, is there ? Yet here is good coffee, as good as we need desire. Mixed with sugar and scalded milk, it is *café au lait ;* when very strong, and without either

sugar or milk, it is *café noir;* with cognac, and sugar to taste, it is *café gloria.*

If we decide to drink this coffee with milk, there is still an important point to be considered. The milk must be quite hot, but it must be *scalded*, not *boiled.* That is, the milk must be put in a jug, the jug set in a saucepan of water, and thus heated over the fire. No one who had not tried would believe what a difference attention to this detail makes in the flavour of coffee.

French people generally use the *cafetière l'excellente* in making coffee. This cafetière is in two parts. The lower part is a sort of coffee-pot made of silver, copper, tin, or porcelain, and the upper part consists of a bell-glass with a closely-fitting cover, which, when reversed, forms a stand. The bell-glass with the coffee in it is placed over the coffee-pot ; the water in the latter is heated by a spirit lamp. As soon as the water boils it rises into the glass, and draws the strength out of the coffee. When the lamp is drawn away the liquid descends once more, and when the lamp is put back it rises again. Thus the coffee may be infused two or three times, according to the degree of strength required.

Coffee made with this machine is so superlative that I cannot attempt to give an idea of it. I have not fully described this method of making coffee thus because I do not know of any place in England where *l'excellente* is sold ; and those who are fortunate enough to have the opportunity of procuring it in Paris may obtain with it a paper with full instructions for use. I may, however, say, for the benefit of those who are thus fortunate, that it is advisable to boil the glass before taking it into use, as this will prevent it breaking or cracking. Also, it is a good plan, after making coffee in it, to leave about half a cupful of made coffee in the lower part, to which the hot water next day can be added. By so doing the coffee each day is made with a weak solution of coffee instead of with plain water, and thus additional strength is secured. I have been told that French *garçons* always adopt this plan.

There is also a German machine on much the same principle for making coffee in the drawing-room, which is greatly valued by those who own it. This cafetière

consists of two vases connected by a syphon. The one vase contains water, the other coffee. A spirit-lamp is put under the water, which, when heated, flows into the vase containing coffee, and thus the beverage is procured. Here, again, I have not described the process in detail, for the same reason as before. I may, however, warn intending purchasers that this very interesting little machine is liable to explode unless carefully used.

A friend of mine, who resided many years in Turkey, told me that the coffee there was the freshest and most delicious he had ever tasted. The Turks allow from two to three tablespoonfuls of coffee to each small cup required.

By the way, I ought to have said that many of the Turks, and also many of the great coffee makers, do not grind their coffee—they pound it in a mortar, as the flavour is supposed to be preserved better by this means. The Turks boil the measure of water needed in a sauce-pan ; when the water boils they put in the coffee, let it boil up three times ; then, if the beverage is intended for Europeans, they drop in a piece of hot charcoal or coal to settle the grounds. If, however, the coffee is intended for Turks, grounds and all are poured into the cup, and very frequently the whole mass is drunk as it is.

Coffee is a highly stimulating and most refreshing beverage ; and there is no doubt that if only it could be well made, it would furnish an excellent and agreeable substitute for alcoholic drinks. As I feel what a benefit this would be to the community, perhaps I may be allowed (after describing all these elaborate ways of making coffee) to conclude by saying that when other utensils are wanting, very good coffee may be made in a plain jug, especially if that jug has a cover ; and this is how it should be done. Heat the jug by filling it with boiling water and draining it. Put in the coffee (a heaped tablespoonful for a pint of water), pour on boiling water, stir the infusion thoroughly with a spoon, then let it stand in a hot place for four or five minutes. Strain it through a hot flannel bag into another heated jug, and serve with an equal quantity of scalded milk.

I think it was Pope who said that "coffee makes a politician wise." Not politicians alone, but other workers

would show their wisdom if, when wearied and exhausted, they would seek refreshment in a cup of coffee thus simply made, rather than trust to the "invisible spirit of wine."

XXII.

BREAKFAST DISHES.

I NEVER feel uneasy about the health of a friend who can eat a thoroughly good breakfast. Unfortunately, however, there are comparatively few people nowadays who are able to do this. The majority of folks nibble a little bread-and-butter or toast, get through a small rasher of bacon, or break an egg, and discover that it is either stale, too hard, or too soft; swallow a cup of coffee, and then declare they have breakfasted. Indeed, I have known gentlemen who made their breakfasts chiefly off their newspapers.

We know that habits of this kind are exceedingly injurious, but I am very much inclined to think that the housekeepers are the persons who are to blame in the matter. People do not have good breakfasts, because for a long time they have not had good breakfasts set before them, and have therefore got into the way of doing without them.

If we could transport one or two of these gentlemen who break their morning fast on political speeches, into a bright-looking room, where the breakfast-table was liberally provided, and a variety of dishes were temptingly spread before them, they would eat breakfast and enjoy it as much as any one, and would feel stronger and better-tempered all day long in consequence thereof.

Every one who has had anything to do with preparing breakfast for a family knows quite well the difficulty to be contended with. If people, maids and mistresses both, enjoyed getting up early on dark, cold mornings, and going down into fireless kitchens or rooms, the thing could be easily managed. Unfortunately, however, there is not

a universal passion for early rising. People lie in bed later than they should do, and, consequently, breakfast is too often got ready in a scramble, and sometimes it is eaten in a scramble also; and we cannot wonder if, under these circumstances, it is not always cooked appetisingly, and is not enjoyed.

It may perhaps be taken for granted that our readers need only to have the evil of a certain course of conduct pointed out to them, in order to induce them to avoid it. We will therefore let it go without saying that the girls of our cookery class will from this time forward always rise in good time. If there is any cooking to be done, they will get well forward with it; their papas and brothers will come down and find the breakfast-table tastefully laid and amply provided, and everybody will be comfortable and satisfied all round. All I can say, under these circumstances, is, that the papas and brothers in question are very fortunate individuals. I should not object to change places with them now and then at breakfast time. I believe I could appreciate the position as much as any one, especially in winter time.

Meanwhile, we have to make up our minds to the fact that virtue of this kind is exceptional, and that breakfast remains to be got ready in households where the "getting up" difficulty, and consequently the breakfast difficulty, has not as yet been satisfactorily mastered. I will therefore try to call to mind a few dishes suitable for breakfast which can either be prepared beforehand or which can be cooked in a short time and without very much elaboration of detail. In doing this, however, I by no means wish to condone the habit of lying late in the morning. I think it is very lazy and foolish, and it would be much better for people to go to bed and get up early. If they would do so they would find the advantage in other directions besides that of breakfasts.

One conclusion which I have arrived at with regard to breakfasts is, that it is not safe, during one half of the year, at any rate, to arrange for dishes which have to be cooked in the oven. I am speaking now of households where the family breakfast early, in order that the master may go to business in good time, or the children may leave early for school. With ordinary ranges, and even

with kitcheners, it is not easy to get the oven in good working order until the fire has burnt brightly for some time. The oven may be used occasionally when circumstances are favourable, but we shall be less likely to suffer disappointment if we leave it out of our calculations altogether. A Dutch oven we may use, certainly, and many tasty little preparations can be cooked with it. The gridiron, too, and the frying-pan, we may employ; but the ordinary oven we will leave for the morning when we have risen in excellent time, and have got well beforehand with our work.

We may rail as we like against English people for sticking to the same dishes year after year, and never providing any variety, but I do not think our countrymen and countrywomen will ever lose their liking for ham or bacon at breakfast-time. Nor is it desirable that they should lose it. Well-cooked bacon or ham, either with eggs or without, is a very appetising and, on the whole, an economical dish. It would be difficult to find one that is more profitable or that is more generally liked than is this. It is inexpensive, because the rind may be scalded and scraped and used for flavouring, and the fat can be used for a variety of purposes, amongst which may be named basting poultry, veal, or game, or even for making pastry for meat pies which are to be eaten hot. Bacon dripping is a very valuable article. Many people like to eat it with bread, or fry crumb of bread in it; and those who are partial to delicacies of this kind will be glad to know that bacon-fat is as nourishing as cod-liver oil, while no one will deny that it is much the more agreeable of the two.

Yet even bacon may be spoiled in the cooking. Everyone knows that bacon should be toasted, not fried; yet the getting-up difficulty frequently leads to the frying-pan being laid hold of in desperation, in order that the bacon may be ready quickly. Under these circumstances the bacon is almost certain to be spoiled. Toast the bacon, do not fry it. Cut it into very thin rashers, divide these into pieces convenient for serving, trim away the rind to prevent the bacon curling up, then put it either on a fork or on the pins of a toaster, or in a Dutch oven, and toast it—not overmuch. Turn it as required. If the frying-

pan must be used, employ it to fry (in bacon-fat) the cold boiled potatoes which were left at dinner yesterday. The potatoes should be cut into dice and fried till they are hot through and quite brown. They will be an excellent accompaniment to the toasted bacon. If, when all is said and done, you cannot get the fire clear for toasting, fry the bacon *slowly*, so you will make the best of a bad job. We may fry sliced ham with a better conscience than bacon. If it is to be a success, however, it must not be dry, it must be cut about the third of an inch thick, it must be fried gently and turned constantly, and it must not be overcooked.

Eggs poached or fried are a very favourite and suitable accompaniment to either bacon or ham. In my opinion the former of these two methods is to be preferred in both cases; but tastes differ on this point as on many others. If the eggs are fried, let them be cooked in sufficient boiling bacon-fat to keep them from burning and no more, and cook them over a moderate fire. Be sure that the fat is entirely free from burn before the eggs are slipped into it. Baste the eggs well, and trim and drain them before serving. If the eggs are poached, use a shallow stewpan, and put a few drops of vinegar or lemon-juice into the water, as this will make the white part whiter. Break the eggs carefully into a cup, and try not to break the yolk, then simmer them in sufficient *gently* boiling water to cover them entirely. Take them out on a drainer the moment the whites look set. If boiled fast they will break. Drain thoroughly and serve.

A very agreeable way of cooking eggs for breakfast is the following: Take as many small, deep tins (dariole moulds are the most suitable for the purpose) as there are eggs to be cooked. Butter them well inside, and sprinkle in them a savoury mixture made of two ounces of finely minced cold boiled ham, fat and lean together, a teaspoonful of chopped parsley, and a little pepper and salt. Break an egg carefully into each tin, place the moulds side by side in a saucepan, with hot water to come half way up the sides of the tins, but not to flow into the eggs. Poach the eggs gently till the white is set. Turn the eggs upon rounds of toasted bread, and serve.

Buttered eggs furnish a pleasant variety for breakfast.

The following is a quick and easy way of preparing this dish. Take one fresh egg for each person, with one egg over if liked, and allow a tablespoonful of milk, an ounce of butter, and a little pepper and salt for two eggs. Melt the butter in a small stewpan over a gentle fire; break the eggs into it, and add the milk and seasoning. Stir one way quickly, and without stopping, until the eggs become thick and lightly set, but on no account allow them to become hard. Have ready a hot dish, or, if preferred, a slice of hot buttered toast; turn the egg mixture upon it, sprinkle a little chopped parsley over the top, and serve.

Eggs on the dish are very good for breakfast. Take a dish (made either of earthenware or tin) which will stand the fire, and can be sent to table. Melt a good slice of butter inside, and break the eggs into it, being careful to preserve the yolks whole. The dish should not be so large that the eggs will spread overmuch. Sprinkle a little salt and pepper on the top, pour a little more butter over, and bake gently and slowly, either on the range or in the oven, till the white of the eggs is lightly set.

Besides the small savoury preparations usually served at breakfast, it is an excellent plan, where it is allowed, to have cold meat of some kind—brawn, pressed beef, cold boiled ham, cold beefsteak pie, collared tongue, a Bath chap, or a hand of pork pickled and boiled—on the sideboard, so that slices can be cut off as they are wanted. It will not be possible for me to give the recipes for each one of these dishes here, but doubtless they are known, or can be easily obtained, by my readers. The advantage connected with them is that they are ready cooked, and need only to be placed on a clean dish and garnished prettily with parsley. They constitute a solid substratum of fact, the *pièce de résistance* of the meal, quieting the conscience of the housekeeper, and partially appeasing the hunger of the guests by their mere appearance.

Pickled herrings are delicious for breakfast, and when delicately prepared are always popular. Of course, they must be cooked the day before they are wanted, and are to be eaten cold. Procure about a dozen fresh herrings, and, if you have a choice, select small fish rather than

large ones, because large herrings are too fatty to be enjoyable. Cut off the heads and tails, slit the fish open, remove the backbone, and draw out as many of the small bones as possible. Rub a little salt on the fish, sprinkle pepper over, roll each fish separately, and tie them with soft string to keep them in position. Place them in a pie-dish or a stone jar, pour over them vinegar, to which a little water has been added; place a cover over the dish, and bake in a gentle oven for a couple of hours. Some people put a little nutmeg with the pepper and salt inside the herring, but this is a matter of taste. When dishing the fish break the rolls in half, and put a little sprig of parsley on each small roll.

Scallops, too, are very good for breakfast, but they are not nearly so well known as they deserve to be, except in certain districts. I have been astonished to find how few people use them, and when they have been laid out on the fishmonger's stall, I have heard passers-by say, "What are those queer-looking things?" The queer-looking things in question are shell-fish, rather larger than oysters. The shells are pale pink, and the flesh is white and deep orange coloured. The fish must be fresh when bought, or it will not be good. The scallops can be prepared overnight, although it will be best not to put them in the shells till morning. Open the shells, and trim away the beards and the black part, leaving only the white and the yellow portion. Allow a heaped tablespoonful of chopped parsley for a dozen scallops, and take a third of the bulk of the flesh of the fish in fine bread-crumbs. Wash the meat which is to be used, drain it, mince it finely, and mix with it the bread-crumbs, parsley, pepper, and salt. Scald and dry the deeper scallop shells, butter the shells inside, sprinkle bread-crumbs over, lay in the minced fish, put bread-crumbs over all; place little pieces of butter here and there over the top, and lay the shells in a Dutch oven before the fire till the meat is hot through. Serve very hot in the shells, with a little vinegar if liked. Allow three scallops for each shell, and one shell for each person. By so doing you may calculate that a dozen scallops will be sufficient for four people. When the shells are done with, scour them, well wash, and dry them. They can

be used for "scalloping" cold meat, poultry, or fish generally. For this the same recipe can be followed, minced meat being substituted for minced scalloped flesh in the preparation.

Poultry or Game, after having been served for dinner, may furnish a very excellent breakfast relish by devilling the legs of the birds for breakfast. Where it is convenient the legs of the birds should be left untouched for this purpose. Occasionally people are met with who like the "dark meat" of poultry, but the taste is not usual, and well-devilled drum-sticks are a delicacy which the most fastidious epicure would not despise. Prepare the drum-sticks over night, as they should lie in the hot mixture for some hours before they are broiled. Take the skin off the legs and score the flesh deeply on both sides of the bone. Mix on a plate a spoonful of mustard, a *little* cayenne pepper, a small spoonful of anchovy sauce, and a large spoonful either of salad oil or dissolved butter; a teaspoonful of Worcester sauce may be added if liked. When quite smooth, cover the legs with this mixture, and get it well in between the scorings. Keep turning them over on the plate, place a cover over them to keep them from getting dry, and leave them in a cool place till morning. A quarter of an hour before they are wanted, lay them on a gridiron, which has been well greased, over a slow fire, and turn them frequently till they are hot throughout and brown without being at all burnt. Sometimes thick slices of undercooked meat are devilled in this way.

Radishes and Watercress are deservedly popular as breakfast relishes, yet not many people think of having *tomato salad* Nevertheless, there are few dishes which are more enjoyable. Tomatoes, especially, are most delicious. I confess that I think the taste for them is an acquired one, yet those who are fond of them like them very much indeed. Tomatoes are much more used now than they were even two or three years ago; they can be bought fresh for a penny or twopence each during seven months out of the twelve, they are very wholesome and refreshing, and I have been told that they act beneficially on the liver. Moreover, their bright colour

adds considerably to the appearance of the breakfast-table, and I advise those who have not tried them to do so at the earliest opportunity. Procure tomatoes which are ripe, of a deep red, and smoothly rounded. Cut them, raw, across into thin slices; half an hour before breakfast-time sprinkle a little pepper and salt over them, and pour on oil and vinegar (more oil than vinegar), as if you were about to mix an ordinary salad. Baste the tomatoes with this sauce four or five times, and repeat the basting when the tomatoes have stood a little while; then serve.

Bloaters, sheep's kidneys, fresh fish, dried haddock, potted meats, sausage rolls, Cornish pasties, boiled eggs, pork pies, etc., are all suitable dishes for breakfast, and will furnish an agreeable variety if served occasionally.

Wholemeal bread should, as a rule, be served for breakfast, but fancy breads, such as home-made scones or rolls, are always welcome. They are excellent served cold. I will give recipes for both.

Scones (made with sour milk).—Put a pound and a half of flour into a bowl and mix thoroughly with it a pinch of salt, a large teaspoonful of cream of tartar, and the same of carbonate of soda. Stir in a pint of sour milk to make a light paste, knead the dough a little, roll the paste till half an inch thick, and cut it into three-cornered pieces. Bake on a floured tin in a quick oven.

Milk-rolls.—Rub a slice of butter the size of a large egg into a pound of flour. Add salt, and a heaped teaspoonful of baking-powder. When well mixed stir in milk to make a stiff dough. Handle lightly, divide into balls, and bake immediately. Brush the rolls with milk when they are half baked. The scones and rolls may be served hot if liked, but they will not be so wholesome as when cold. Indeed, in my opinion, hot bread, hot rolls, and, more than all, hot buttered toast are about the most indigestible things that anyone can take.

Oatmeal Porridge.—Considering what is wholesome chiefly, there is nothing like a plate of oatmeal porridge, a bowl of boiled milk, or a plate of hominy for breakfast. If we were to make a practice of beginning the morning

meal with a small quantity of any one of these preparations, and were to go on to meats or so-called "relishes," with cocoa, coffee, or tea afterwards, we should be justified in saying at the close of the repast that we had breakfasted. Nor ought we to suppose that in doing so we should be taking more than was required. If food is needed at any time of the day it is surely needed at breakfast-time. We come to breakfast after a long fast, we need strength for the day's work, and how can we expect to go through it bravely if we start feeling faint and hungry. Of course, if we have taken a heavy supper just before retiring to rest we cannot expect to have much appetite for breakfast. To my mind, however, supper is a meal taken at the wrong end of the day. But if we have had a light supper, a good night's rest, and are in good health, a hearty breakfast is just the thing to strengthen us for the day's duties.

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