Hints on cookery and management of the table (ma cuisine) / translated from the French of Gabrielle Le Brasseur by Mary Hooper.

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HINTS ON COOKERY

and Management of the Table.

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AND

MANAGEMENT OF THE TABLE

(MA CUISINE)

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF

GABRIELLE LE BRASSEUR

BY

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LONDON
SPENCER BLACKETT
35, ST. BRIDE STREET, LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.
1891

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH these Hints on Cookery and General Management of the Table were written by a Frenchwoman for her own people, there is much to be gathered from them which may be universally useful. The author has, indeed, sometimes exalted her own nationality at the expense of others, but, on the principle that "happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending," these uncomplimentary remarks have been allowed to stand in the translation.

Exception will certainly be taken to the author's sweeping condemnation of English roast beef; yet there is some justice in it, for we all know how the best material in the world can be spoiled by careless cookery; and it is undoubtedly true, as the author asserts, that no quantity of salt, pepper, or sauces can in any measure compensate for the want of salt during the roasting

of the meat. A notion prevails among English cooks that to salt meat before roasting draws out the juices, and good service is done in exposing this fallacy.

The boiled potatoes which appear at each meal on English and German tables, are justly denounced by our author. Not only do we lose much valuable nourishment by our method of cooking vegetables simply in water, but they are thereby rendered most insipid and for many people indigestible. When properly fried in fat, potatoes are transformed into a delicious and delicate article of diet, of which adults and children may alike eat with advantage. On the score of expense there need be no difficulty; for the dripping which in too many houses goes into the grease-pot answers perfectly well for frying purposes; and for the rest, with a little fire or a gas-jet and ordinary care, all is simple enough. One is at a loss to understand how it is that a nation standing foremost in science and art, and able to perform astonishing feats of engineering skill, is yet unable to compass fried potatoes as a dish of every-day family fare!

It is impossible to controvert the assertion that Frenchwomen are queens of the kitchen, and that they excel above all other nations in the delicate and delightful art of cooking. It is to their patience and to the fact that the smallest detail does not escape their attention, that their superiority is due. If our countrywomen will but condescend to imitation in these particulars, the reproaches which are now heaped upon our national cookery will speedily be converted into praises.

M. H.

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HINTS ON COOKERY

AND

MANAGEMENT OF THE TABLE

FIRST LETTER.

INTRODUCTION.

Vaugelas n'apprend point à bien faire un potage,
Et Malherbe et Balzac, si savants en grand mots,
En cuisine, peut-être, auraient été des sots.

MOLIÈRE.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I comply with your oft-expressed wish and dedicate to you these letters, on an art which Carême has not inaptly named "the fifth of the fine arts." You are too good and worthy a French woman to disdain one of our great national qualities, and one which I have failed to meet with, notwithstanding the romancers, either in England, the country which has won the reputation above all others for being practical and comfortable, or in Germany, the land of Charlotte and slices of

bread and butter! The French woman is the only woman in the world who can venture into the kitchen in a silk dress without being adorned with an apron (which, by the way, other nationalities manage to soil and stain), or even getting the edges of her cuffs dirty, because she is the most skilful and least pedantic of housewives. She carries into little household cares a lightness and an air of not being troubled by them, which is Heaven's own gift.

A celebrated gourmet, a friend of my father's, the Marquis of Cussy, said to him that "the French woman was created by God to preside over the kitchen." Her sagacious little nose, and delicate sense of taste, which has been educated since her childhood by the best wines and varied and excellent fruits of her country, lead her to wish to be a professor of gastronomy and M.D. of the kitchen. She holds these titles in honour, she having been educated to understand that she is placed too high in the scale of womanhood to think herself lowered in applying her mind to little household cares; on the contrary, in undertaking the intelligent direction of them she raises them to her own level.

The chronicles of the kitchen tell us that illustrious women in all ages have not disdained culinary occupations. We hear of the elegance of Cleopatra's banquets ordered by herself, and history tells us that Agrippina's talent for flavour-

ing mushrooms gained for her the power that she possessed over her husband. And, to give you proofs in a period nearer to our own day, I quote an example in an elegant lady of the seventeenth century, Madame de Sablé, who occupied herself seriously in the making of dainty dishes, and who has left us recipes for pastry bearing her own name, and divers excellent sweet dishes. Madame de Maintenon's famous cutlets probably did more than anything else to second her political plans and her projects for power with the great King. These veal cutlets en papillotes protected the Royal stomach from the effects of grease, and her master proved that he was not ungrateful. Madame de Conti, too, knowing the King's failing, invented for his benefit her breast of mutton à la Conti, larded with bacon and seasoned with anchovies and garlic, in the hope of turning away any feeling of resentment that Louis XIV. had for her brother and her husband.

The Princess of Soubise gave her name to the purée of onions which serves as a bed for fine mutton cutlets, and her success inspired the Duchesse de Mailly in her immortal leg of mutton à la Mailly.

We know you to be, dear friend, clever in all the arts that women excel in, a good musician, and that your education leaves nothing to be desired. I approve of this kind of education, both pleasing and solid, which produces in the nineteenth

century neither pedantry nor clumsiness anywhere in France.

I agree with Molière that a woman should have clear ideas on all subjects, but for all this I would not for anything in the world take away or underrate the necessity of attention to culinary matters, for, do you see, my dear—and I whisper it into your ear so that no man shall hear—I have already discovered among gentlemen some who care little for music or science, others condemning the higher education of girls, but I have never found one yet who despised a good dish. I know some, too, even the most eminent men, who gather willingly round a good table presided over by a clever housewife who, concealing her learning in order that no one may be jealous, shows only those of her talents the value of which "these gentlemen" cannot contest, and which they are obliged to praise, no matter to what society, political, scientific, or literary, they may happen to belong.

One must not say, "It is the affair of the cook." A good cook is an expensive article, and ordinary households must give up the idea of finding one ready made; still more unusual is it to find one honest, as well as capable. Unless from the first you are able to train one, if you cannot give clever and practical hints, if you hesitate and make mistakes, you are lost. She will consider herself so much your superior in the delicate and difficult art

of governing—even if it is only in the kitchen—that you will become her slave, for you will not dare to change her if she is clever, and you are her victim if she is a bad cook and you are unable to teach her. So congratulate yourself on the possession of a friend who is very practical, and who experiments for you at the side of the stove, and practises again on your behalf the simple theories that she will send you.

I do not speak of Spanish or Polish recipes, or of complicated formulas for confectionery, which can be procured at a shop and cheaper than when made at home, with the exception perhaps of some sorts of household pies, nor am I going to speak of jams, or syrups which are like badly made diluted jelly, of liqueurs that smell of drugs, or of preserves which get mouldy. I shall only speak to you of good cooking, simple and easy, and within the reach of all. I shall call it "Ma Cuisine," because it is just what I practise every day, and just as one speaks of a dress as one's everyday dress, the pretty, simple costume well made and nicely fitting, so that its style doubles the worth of the stuff a hundred-fold. My kitchen does not necessitate a "Cordon bleu," so called on account of the ribbon which hangs on the handle of the basket suspended to the arm of all great cooks. A housewife imbued with my good principles—if I call them good it is because they are simple, and easy to carry out—will be able

to have at home a varied table, carefully attended to, and delicate enough to tempt all palates, even including that of her lord and master.

You used to tell me, when nursing your dolls, that no one but yourself should ever have the care of your babies' food. Do not forget the oldest amongst them—he who is called the husband. Provide good milk for the little ones, and good dishes for the grown-up. You must be, if you will but believe it, a good nurse to both. I will furnish you with the means of doing it in my letters; the profit you will derive from them will enable you to pass over their dryness.

C. Asserolette.

SECOND LETTER.

THE SPOILT DINNER.

The pot-au-feu — Historical dishes — Italian pastes, and other accessories for soups: nouilles, purées of vegetables, various soups—Fish : how to know that it is fresh—Court-bouillon—Sauces, white, brown, Dutch, and Béarnaise—Use of flour and jelly in sauces—Hot ham—Spinach, sorrel, chicory—Use of fat and of butter —Roast joints—Oven—Diverse manners of roasting —Rice pudding—Caramels—Story of Célestin.

N'est point amphitryon qui veut,
Car il ne suffit pas d'être millionnaire ;
Le véritable amphitryon
Est celui chez lequel on dîne,
Qui, des gourmets à fond connaissant la doctrine,
Choisit son monde et fait aux amis invités
Et de son accueil enchantés,
Faire chère excellente et fine.

De Fos.

SINCE my last letter, my dear young friend, I have been obliged to swallow something very difficult to digest ; take the statement literally. I have been obliged to accept an invitation to dinner at the D——s'.

Their fortune permits them, without offering us a banquet, to have treated us better.

Had the mistress of the house been more skilled in the art of gastronomy, without making her menu more expensive she could have modified it, and in any case have superintended it, so that we could have passed a good time; for how can one enjoy the conversation of pleasant people invited in one's honour, while the palate is enduring a thousand torments? Could my intellect rejoice, while my stomach was being tortured with bad cooking? I swallowed first in silence, with my eyes turned from it, a thick tapioca soup, dotted with little black specks, which swam and turned like so many gigantic animalcula; however, the foundation of it was not so bad. The pot-au-feu had only simmered, and not boiled, during the six or seven hours necessary for it to cook; the four quarts of water to four pounds of beef had had, in addition, a small piece of cow-heel, which improved it, also vegetables in abundance, carrots, turnips, leeks, onions, parsnips, heads of celery, an onion stuck with cloves, and even a tomato to heighten the flavour of it. The meat, put in cold water, had not had the pores closed, and thus had given out all its juices. The old and useless custom of skimming the pot-au-feu having been abandoned, the soup contained its most nourishing portion. The first ladles of the soup,

where the particles of fat swim, had been removed and put aside in order to properly clear the soup of grease, and the bouillon be thus saved from having the horrible taste of reheated fat. I should have thought that a country cook, knowing her "soup pot," ought yet to have made a good job out of it; but this one, ignorant of the use of Italian pastes, had made a muddle of it. The effective intervention of the mistress of the house, or her advice, had been evidently wanting at the critical moment, and the result was, the soup was spoilt.

It seemed to me, that to avoid so bad a result, our hostess might have sacrificed, without hurting herself, a few moments to the cares of the kitchen. She would only, by so doing, have followed illustrious examples, and not have been in such bad company after all. Louis XVIII. was the author of and sponsor for soup à la Xavier; Charles X. composed, with his cook, the dish of sweetbreads à la d'Artois; Sénac de Meilhan invented soup made with poached eggs; Albéroni, a soup made with cheese; and Stanislas, King of Poland, the Baba. We are told that the latter King, when dethroned, passing one day near Châlons, stopped at an inn, and with his own Royal hands prepared an onion soup. They kept the recipe—here it is: The King first toasted some slices of bread, then he buttered them, and put the

slices in the oven; he then fried some onions to a beautiful colour by moving them all the time, poured some water over all, and left it to simmer for a quarter of an hour. Though possibly you will accuse me of presumption, I will confess the belief that I have perfected this Royal soup, by thickening it with a piece of butter rolled in flour, and by beating up in the tureen before pouring in the soup a glass of milk mixed with the yolks of some eggs at the moment of serving.

Madame D—— ought to have told her cook first of all to strain the broth through a fine wire sieve, and have reminded her that a small dessertspoonful of either tapioca, sago, semolina, vermicelli, flour, rice, or any of the Italian pastes, is sufficient for each guest. Generally, a countrywoman does not know how to use these articles. Above all, she should have been told that after boiling for ten minutes, while waiting on the stove to be poured into the tureen, a skin forms itself on the top, which must be carefully skimmed off or broken up, as, if this is not done, it both spoils the soup, makes it look disagreeable, and sets the guests against it.

The appearance of a dish is half its value. The sense of sight certainly helps the sense of taste.

Oh, power of routine! Why are we so often given a glutinous, sticky kind of soup called "tapioca," when one can make all sorts of good

little things oneself to put into soup, such as les carrés à la reine, nice fresh dumplings, toasted slices of bread, veloutés, vegetables, either julienne or en purée, poached or scrambled eggs, shredded macaroni with cheese, etc.?

Nothing is more simple than a velouté. For six persons, you take two good tablespoonfuls of rice flour mixed in half a pint of cold broth. This is poured into the boiling broth, and finally into a tureen, at the bottom of which is previously put the yolks of two eggs, and half a wine-glassful of cream.

To make the little carrés à la reine, or custard, you must butter a mould, beat four eggs, whites and yolks together, mixed with their own weight of tepid broth, together with a little salt, pepper, and grated nutmeg. Place the mould for six minutes in the bain-marie, and five minutes in the oven; take out your custard and cut it in squares, which you throw into the soup.

A good soup can be made of scrambled eggs by mixing two whites and yolks with a spoonful of flour beaten up in half a pint of cold broth. This is poured into the rest of the boiling broth, and it will form, in about five minutes, into some small irregular balls, resembling curds, of an agreeable taste and not in any way interfering with the flavour of the soup itself. To poach eggs it is necessary to break them very close to the boiling

liquid, one after the other, and carefully, so that they do not touch. Let them cook until the whites become set, though the yolk must remain soft.

The macaroni nouilles, and rice, must be cooked in a little broth separately, so as not to thicken the soup, to which they must be added at the last moment. A plate of grated Gruyère cheese should be served with it at the table.

Fresh nouilles are incomparably better than vermicelli, and do not turn the soup sour as vermicelli sometimes does. They must be cut very small for soup, and larger if they are to be sauté in butter and with cheese, macaroni fashion. You make a hole in the middle of a quarter of a pound of flour, pour into it a gill of water, add a little salt, three eggs, work it well up; roll out the paste with a floured rolling-pin so as to form one or two large thin sheets, and leave it to dry for an hour. Then dredge the sheets with flour, fold them, and cut them into bands, unfold them and leave them to dry again until the moment of serving.

Two handfuls of green peas or French beans cut up flavour soup very nicely. Well-cooked carrots, or vegetables from the pot-au-feu, passed through a sieve, and thus making a light purée with a little tapioca to bind it, form an addition.

For cabbage soup, add to the ordinary vegetables some potatoes, haricot beans, and cabbages

which have already been cut into four and blanched. Salt pork may be used with advantage instead of beef, if it is liked, in a cabbage soup; but in summer it becomes sour very quickly.

Purées of vegetables can be made maigre, or with meat. Bones from the butcher's, or fragments of waste meat, improve them greatly.

Vegetables must be passed through a sieve, whether boiled in water or in broth, seasoned and thickened before adding them to the soup in the stewpan. The best kind of purées are, purées of potatoes with leeks, lentils with sorrel, purée of green peas named à la Chantilly, of white haricots with fried croûtons, and Saint Germains, which is composed of purée of split peas or pea-flour, which is mixed up cold, and is very delicate, and strewed over with green peas, fried croûtons, or little sprigs of tarragon. All these soups are finished with a piece of fresh butter put in at the moment of serving.

But to return to the D——s. While the hors-d'œuvres, radishes, butter, sardines, peppered artichokes, pickled oysters, etc., were being handed round, which, though a little old-fashioned, are still appreciated in the country, especially to help out a somewhat doubtful dinner, I was delighted to see a fine fish brought in, which I had seen that morning in the net of an old fisherman; it had shining scales, red gills, and clear luminous eyes. Remember these signs of a fresh fish. But, alas!

it came on the table, ripped open and hacked about, as if it had fallen under the power of a machine-gun instead of having been carefully drawn out of the water.

Alas! the fish had not been put into a cold court-bouillon, as I do it, with white wine, spices, and salt, which you can put back into a well-corked bottle and use over again. This poor creature had evidently been plunged into a boiling liquid, and consequently it had broken in a dozen places, for fish should only simmer, and not be allowed to boil. The popular proverb says, "The sauce makes the fish go down;" I wish it had done so in our case.

Oh, white sauce! Stumbling-block of inexperienced cooks, how many gastronomical frauds are committed in thy name! That which was presented to us, my dear friend, could have held its own against the paste used by bill-stickers in fixing up their papers, and we will leave it to these political sauce spoilers.

It is very singular that a proper use of flour is so little defined and understood, that plain cooks seem to ignore completely the art of carefully disguising it. To do this successfully, the flour must be mixed with cold water and cooked for a long time, twenty to thirty minutes, according to the quantity of white sauce; then it must be passed through a fine sieve—no matter for what kind of

hot sauce, it must be thus passed. Remember this important advice, that all sauces must be strained; no sauce is homogeneous, thick, and delicate, when the flour, having been cooked a long time, has not been passed through a fine sieve; whether it is the elegant chervil or Périgueux sauce, or the humble brown sauce for haricot mutton, or white sauce for family use, each must be strained, as without this precaution they will be coarse and lumpy; this is one of the primary lessons a cook must learn.

When a good ordinary white sauce is wanted, which will not take too great a quantity of butter, such as Dutch sauce does, which is the despair of economical managers, two or three dessertspoonfuls of very fine oatmeal may be mixed, cold, with two glasses of water slightly salted. This mixture must be boiled for twenty minutes at least, and must at first be stirred. It must be strained in its boiling state, and just before it is served there is added, stirring all the time but without replacing it on the fire, some butter broken into small pieces. If the sauce were not very hot the butter would not melt, and if it were replaced on the fire the cooked butter would turn into oil and float on the top of the sauce, and become as disagreeable to the taste as to the sight.

At the bottom of the sauce-boat put the yolk of an egg, pour the sauce on to it, still stirring, and add a pinch of salt and of white pepper.

Dutch sauce is made with the freshest butter; no other will make the real Dutch sauce. Break three yolks in a basin, with a pinch of fine salt, one of white pepper, and one or two teaspoonfuls of water. Put the basin into the bain-marie, not too hot, add to the eggs, stirring all the time, some small pieces of butter, which will gradually turn into cream. It is a real mayonnaise in which butter is substituted for oil. If by some unforeseen mischance it becomes too thin, for this sauce ought to be pretty thick, it may be thickened by adding one or two tablespoonfuls of ordinary white sauce, which has been passed through a sieve, which I have already told you how to make.

A Béarnaise sauce, generally served with a fillet of beef grilled or roasted, is identically the same, except that it is made a little thinner with jelly and a very condensed gravy, made with a wine-glass of white wine, in which onions, garlic, eschalots, and spices, have been cooked, which is boiled down to two tablespoonfuls. But to return to the dinner.

A ham, hot, surrounded by a coarse brown sauce, followed the unrecognisable remains of that unhappy fish. This sauce might have figured at Sparta as the famous black broth—always too much flour when it should be used quite in homeopathic doses, and but lightly browned. It should only be considered as a thickening, sometimes to serve as a

basis for a sauce, and sometimes to come to the rescue when a sauce is too thin. In this case, work a dessertspoonful with some butter, and drop this little ball, known as liaison, into the boiling sauce; or, better still, dissolve a dessertspoonful of potato flour in cold water, and pour into the sauce to thicken it; but remark that if this potato flour is allowed to cook too long, it becomes quite thin, and loses its property of thickening. Certain sauces are reduced by cooking them more quickly and for longer time in an uncovered stewpan, after having taken out the meat with which they will be served.

The real way to obtain lightly brown, and at the same time fine rich sauces, is to make them of meat jelly. I will teach you how to make at home the indispensable basis of cookery called gravy glaze, or jelly, instead of buying ready made that which is but coloured isinglass.

The basis of all brown sauces worthy to appear on honest tables is a light roux, composed of flour browned in butter, and the necessary meat jelly added to it. That presented to us by our friends, under the name of Madeira sauce, had the bad flavour of uncooked wine, or, rather, which had not been cooked long enough in the sauce that I have described to you.

The ham which was immersed therein, had evidently not been cooked beforehand for the traditional half-hour to the pound, in a stock

made of half wine and half broth, highly flavoured with thyme, bay-leaves, pepper, and cloves. The spinach which surrounded it was coarsely chopped, like that which one buys all ready at milkshops in Paris; whereas, to get good spinach, you have to remove, first of all, the middle stalk, blanch the spinach in boiling water, leave it to drain, and pound it with a wooden pestle, and pass, not through a coarse sieve, but through one of fine hair or wire, then they are as fine and delicate as cream; then add a little liaison. They are mixed with jelly if for the accompaniment of meat, or cream if they are to be eaten maigre. In either case, add the butter only at the moment of serving. It must not be put again on to the fire to turn into oil. This is the second time I remind you of this precept, and it applies for all the general uses of butter, and especially when employed for vegetables.

Sorrel and endive may be cooked in the same manner as spinach.

The difference between butter and fat in cookery is, that the latter must be left longer on the fire, so as to lose the taste, which has to be disguised. Fat can be used with advantage for all meats cooked in the stewpan for cabbage, sourcrout, Lenten soups called "maigre," and which are a hundred times better done with fat, in spite of the Parisian prejudice against it.

It is so also in beef broth; butter would be of no use. This favourite national soup gains body by melted fat of the meat, so judges of soup have concluded that by cooking the fat for a long time, as one does for the pot-au-feu, Lenten soups can be made with the richness of meat soups. The fat that I use is that of veal kidneys, chopped up and melted slowly; before it is cold, I pour on it the fourth of its own weight of good oil, so that it hardens less.

Do, young housekeeper, try fat for all which has to simmer for a long time, such as beef à la mode, stewed veal, and civet of hare; your kitchen expenses will be lessened. Your most difficult task will be to make your cook understand, especially if she is a country woman, that the small quantity of butter is invariably lost in the greater quantity of fat which comes from the meat while cooking, and that butter thus recooked loses its qualities. Understand this fact for her.

I say nothing about the joint served to us on that unlucky day. It had been covered with butter, instead of having been basted with fat or dripping, and it swam in an ocean of broth embellished with the usurped title of gravy.

All roasted joints which are not cooked on spits are simply passable, under the condition of the cook knowing the little tricks I am going to teach you. Let me tell you first that above all things for

roasting one must have a strong and hot fire. The meat is frequently basted, first with two or three tablespoonfuls of broth or salted water—this prevents the dripping-pan from burning—and with its own dripping, which quickly begins to run. Pepper and salt the joint while it is turning, add more gravy if it shows signs of drying up, being careful to take off by degrees the particles adhering to the dripping-pan, which give body to the gravy; but the addition to the liquid must be carefully made, and never at the last moment. Those only who want to spoil a joint completely would think of adding broth or gravy at the last moment.

Unfortunately, it is only in the country that one still finds the classical roasting chimney.

When one does not possess the charcoal roaster, called a kitchener, or range, which after the open fire is the best way of roasting meat and poultry, and when one has not an excellent gas roasting apparatus, which I consider the very best means of supplying the place of the open fire, one must be content to cook the meat in the oven.

It is here that you must follow my instructions to the letter, under pain of eating a very badly cooked joint.

Most cooks place in an earthenware dish the piece of meat, buttered and in water, then they shut the oven door hermetically.

First trouble: The joint, damp from its own steam and bathed in water, becomes soft, insipid, and comes to table discoloured and shaky, as if it were ashamed of the bad reception gourmets will give it.

Second trouble: The earthenware dish on which the meat rests, saturated with grease, and constantly being used in the oven, communicates to the meat a horrible taste *sui generis*. It is no longer a roasted joint, but a steamed one.

To remedy these troubles, first of all use a dish of copper or one of enamelled or tinned iron. Secondly, place between the said dish and the meat to be cooked a stand with bars; in this manner the joint does not lie in its own gravy, being isolated from it. Thirdly, leave the oven door slightly ajar, or have an opening made, by which the vapour can escape and the outer air enter.

A turnspit is now made, which can be put into a hot oven; it is the latest improvement. Now I have put you up to all the little niceties necessary to cook a joint properly.

The dinner finished by the appearance of what should have been green vegetables. They were vegetables, but they were not green at all, because the cook had not cooked them in boiling salted water, and had not kept the same high

temperature all the time of cooking. A pinch of bicarbonate of soda would have rendered the water softer, and the vegetables themselves more tender. And then, to crown the whole, came a rice pudding, or what was meant to be a gâteau de riz, which might have been a cannon ball, to judge from its hardness and its crust of burnt sugar or blackened caramel.

This family sweet dish may be either very good or very bad, according to the proportion of the ingredients and the manner it is mixed. For us ten guests it would have been ample to have cooked five tablespoonfuls of good Carolina rice in milk that had been already boiled. It is necessary to boil the milk beforehand, to prevent its turning when mixed with the other ingredients, which is an annoying waste. Five large glasses of milk, ten lumps of sugar, half a stick of vanilla, which must be cooked with the rice, stirring it frequently to prevent it from burning. Then you take the rice from the fire, and while it is still hot, but not boiling, add five yolks and five whites of eggs beaten into snow; pour this mixture into a caramelled mould and cook it from thirty to forty minutes in the bain-marie, that is to say, in hot water.

To caramel the mould, crush six to eight lumps of sugar slightly moistened in a stew-

pan, place it on a bright fire and the sugar will melt rapidly and become brown. Do not wait for the colour to be dark before you take your mould from the fire, and turn it about so that the syrup, or caramel, may cover the sides as well as the bottom. The light caramel, once cold, resembles a thin crust of barley-sugar and allows the cake to be turned easily out of the mould. A buttered mould is not so inviting to look at as a caramelled one. A vanilla-flavoured custard is served with either a rice or semolina pudding. I will give you the recipe another day. A currant syrup or jam may be substituted for the custard.

I say nothing about the end of this dreadful dinner—damp fruits, badly chosen, badly assorted dessert, cold coffee.

The hosts, who were so pretentious as to talk during the meal æsthetically and on matters of taste, reminded me of a little anecdote which I will tell you to make you swallow the recital of my poor dinner. In the eighteenth century, a monk, who was a bit of a wit, aided a brother cook belonging to the Célestins, to write a cookery book. He said in his preface that it was a mistake to apply the term "good taste" to those who were clever in music or painting; that these, at most, were people with good ears

or good eyes; but that those only are of good taste who understand good stews. The monk certainly was right, at least grammatically; and upon this, my dear young friend, I embrace you and say to you, I will write again soon.

THIRD LETTER.

THE MAIGRE DINNER. DISHES SUITABLE FOR DAYS OF ABSTINENCE.

How to preserve fresh butter—Frying—Green sauce—Time required for roasting—Lobster in the American fashion, and crabs in the Bordelaise way—The five ways of cooking fish: Fried, boiled, grilled, au gratin, and en matelote—Mayonnaise sauce, and what to do if it turns—Maître d'hôtel sauce—Shrimp sauce, and Génevoise sauce—Fried vegetables—Frying batter—Creams in little cups—Coffee cream—Cream flavoured with vanilla, with chocolate—English cream—Snow eggs—The remedy when cream turns—Floating isle—The ewer substituted for finger-glasses—Anecdote about the Curés of Coulevey.

L'appétit est le plus grand des ingrats : plus vous faites pour lui, plus tôt il vous abandonne.

MARQUIS DE CUSSY.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have just returned from Lower Normandy, where I have been paying a visit to my old Aunt L——.

If it were not for the promise I made to myself that I should only have one end in view

in writing to you, which would be a purely useful one, I should here find a good opportunity to describe to you this rich and plentiful country. Its pasture grounds are simply marvellous, so productive and fertile; the cows, too, abound, and supply enormous quantities of butter, which, however, I must say, they use too lavishly. Their roasted joints swim in it, the vegetables and the stews are submerged in it. They make up their butter here with cream several days old. They do not sufficiently knead and wash it, so that the whey it contains makes it rapidly turn sour; however, the people of the country do not seem to object to it in this rancid state. To prevent this taking place, I have taught the cook in this house to rewash the butter in several waters, to press it into china bowls, and to turn over these said bowls into deep plates filled with water. In this way the butter itself is kept from contact with air and water, and does not become strong, as it will when it is laid in the water. The water in the plate has to be renewed twice a day so that it does not become foul. Under the influence of this little lesson the cooking has become suddenly better, and I must own they have given me very good cheer at Coulevey.

It was reserved for Friday to give me some astonishing surprises. On that day there had

been some local ceremony at the church, and after the Mass several of the priests from the suburbs came to us for luncheon, which, by the way, is called dinner in those parts. Two soups, maigre prepared for a fasting day, or, rather, day of abstinence; all sorts of hors d'œuvres equally suitable for a Friday, and specially prepared; all kinds of fish and shell-fish; all sorts of vegetables, and dishes prepared with milk, appeared at this repast; the only reproach which one could make with regard to it being the fact of its somewhat tiresome superabundance.

Personally, I paid my respects to the bisque soup. The recipe for it, which I send you, is by the famous cook, Vuillemot, who was proprietor of the Hôtel de la Cloche at Compiègne (where his friend and patron, Alexandre Dumas *père*, wrote his great work, "Monte Cristo"). Afterwards, this Vuillemot became the head of the well-known Tête Noire at St. Cloud, and, later on, master of the great Restaurant de France, in Paris, in the Madeleine quarter. Vuillemot was the co-operator and fellow-worker with Alexandre Dumas in his famous dictionary of cookery.

Wash (so runs the recipe) fifty crawfish, and throw them into a stewpan with some minced carrots and onions, a small bunch of herbs, salt, pepper, pimento in powder moistened with a

ladleful of consommé, or of maigre broth, if it is for a Friday. When they are cooked, remove the meat from the tails, cut it into dice and put it aside; cook a quarter of a pound of rice in broth (or in water, as the case may be), add it to the preceding ingredients, together with the pieces of crawfish and their shells, moisten and pass through a strainer; add to this purée the broth of the crawfish, stir it on the stove with a wooden spoon, take it off before it quite boils and remove the purée, add to it a piece of butter; put it in the bain-marie, throw in the cut tails, also croûtons fried in butter. Pour over it the clear part, which has been reserved, and serve it very hot.

The other soup, maigre, was intended for those who feared to venture upon the delights, and possible indigestion, that might be caused by the bisque. It was sorrel soup—potage à l'oseille, as it is called in French; unfortunately in this particular case it was too thin. A piece of bread, the size of one's fist, ought to have been allowed to boil in it until completely dissolved; this method of using bread in the maigre soups gives them their substance and smoothness. Another thing they had evidently omitted was to blanch this soup, that is to say, it should have been poured into the soup-bowl upon the yolks of two eggs, together with a piece of fresh

butter; and it is as well to mention that this is a general principle or rule with regard to maigre soups, and applies to them nearly all. They served us next with eggs done in a variety of fashions and sauces: eggs mixed with asparagus points, poached eggs with tomato sauce, eggs fried with black butter, etc.

This somehow reminds me of the history of Æsop. I wonder if you know it? His master commanded him to prepare a meal of "everything that was best," and Æsop only placed before him tongues, cooked, it is true, in a hundred different ways. To the reproaches with which his master greeted him, the slave merely replied: "I have served what there is that is best; for is not the tongue the organ of the orator, of the philosopher, of the philanthropist?" etc.; and when, another day, the master ordered him to prepare him what there was that is worst, Æsop again served nothing but tongues, "as" he remarked, "the tongue is the very worst thing, when one puts it to an evil use, for it serves to lie, to calumniate, to dispute," and so on.

Then came soles fried à la Colbert. What a blessing is the art of frying! Brillat-Savarin might, in honour of the natural aptitude one must have for frying, and from its real difficulty, have modified his proverb, "One can become a

cook, but one has to be born a roaster," and say, "One has to be born with the knowledge of how to fry."

Now there are rules laid down with regard to roasting, which are these. That meat should roast before a good clear fire, allowing a quarter of an hour for each pound of red meat, such as the fillet of beef, leg of mutton; half an hour for white meats, to wit, veal or pork. But in the art of frying, there is no set rule to go by; one must judge at the exact moment oneself. It has to be done on a clear fire, which must not be fierce enough to burn the interior of the pan. Also, it must be powerful enough to cook with, without its being hot enough to scorch up either the fat or the fish. If, on the other hand, it is not just the right heat, all that is fried will come out pale, flabby, and greasy. Remember, too, to have sufficient fat, or else the things to be fried will absorb it all. Also, they must have plenty of room so that they do not touch each other, and discretion has to be exercised so that they do not burn. "All the merit of frying," says the illustrious Brillat-Savarin, "proves a surprise," as, when it has sufficiently "taken," a sort of crust forms itself round the object, which prevents the grease from penetrating.

In order to make sure of the right degree of heat, one can throw into the fat one drop of water, which will splutter off if it is at the right point, or else a crumb of bread can be thrown into it, which should become tinged a golden colour without being blackened.

Butter is not a good frying medium ; oil is the best. Also a mixture of fat, as of beef kidney fat and the fat of veal kidney melted together, is far superior for frying to the lard which is commonly used.

The various things which are fried should be taken out of the frying-pan with a skimmer, and left for a moment to drain on a coarse napkin, which will absorb all the superfluous fat. It should then be garnished with fried parsley, and accompanied with lemon. The pieces which are to be fried are rolled in flour; they should be dry and crisp. I much like mayonnaise sauce to accompany and heighten the flavour of fried brains, fried eels, or any remains of poultry. A world of good things is contained in the noble art of frying.

But to return to our soles cooked in Colbert fashion. Once they are taken out of the frying-pan and dried, the side is split open and maître d'hôtel sauce is introduced, that is to say, butter beaten up with a fork, salted, peppered, and sprinkled with finely minced

parsley, with a few drops of lemon added. This sauce, or dressing, should never go near the fire.

I cannot enumerate all the various kinds of fish, both hot and cold, which filed in succession before us. These last, the soles, had the accompaniment of a green sauce, which sauce has for foundation French mustard—the commonest is the best and is also the cheapest; on this mustard one sprinkles, first oil, and then vinegar, salt, pepper, and a good quantity of herbs, such as tarragon, pimpernel, chervil, without disdaining a little bit of chives.

Lobster dressed in Bordelaise fashion, or in the American way, made their triumphal entrance in the middle of a victorious sauce. Poor things! I myself assisted at the cruel death of these excellent shell-fish; they cut them up into joints while alive! They divide their head into quarters, and place all the pieces back in their shell, carefully preserving the water which oozes out, and putting it into a saucepan, in which is a piece of rind of bacon with fifteen peeled onions, a clove of eschalot, a leek, a bundle of herbs, thyme, laurel-leaf, and parsley, a large pinch of mixed spices, an atom of cayenne pepper, and a small bottle of white wine.

At the end of a quarter of an hour, the poor lobster, which has long since ceased to

suffer, is cooked. It is taken from the fire, a roux is made, which is moistened with some broth; meat jelly is then added. The onions are thoroughly cooked in this jelly, they are mashed, and the sauce passed through the sieve, and, just at the moment of serving, there is mixed with it, a bottle of tomatoes, or tomato sauce, made of fresh tomatoes, well spiced. Lobster sauce, served in the American way, should be pretty thick, and pretty hot. The same sauce is eaten with crabs, served in Bordelaise fashion, which do not require more than five or six minutes' cooking.

It is, of course, understood that at the last moment the lobster or the crab is warmed in the sauce for one or two minutes.

That memorable dinner convinced me more than ever that each sort of fish ought to be cooked and served in the particular manner most likely to set off its own peculiar merits.

I divide the manner of dressing fish under five headings: boiled, grilled, fried, au gratin, and en matelote.

If you will take my advice, leave the boiling in stock, or court-bouillon, to the turbot, to the dab, and to trout, or salmon-trout. Boiled fish, if one tasted it with one's eyes shut, is difficult to distinguish the one from the other. I have seen bets made, and won, on this subject. Fish

cooked in stock seems only to have been invented, one would think, to make a good sauce have its full value; for example, Dutch sauce, or sauce Hollandaise, which is also called crayfish sauce, when one has added just a little carmine to colour it, and the tails of crayfish shelled. Genevoise sauce is now used less than formerly with boiled fish ; it is simply sauce matelote, passed through a sieve.

Let slices of salmon and slices of tunny fish be grilled, taking care first to heat the gridiron well. Shad is served with a purée of sorrel; mackerel, with maître d'hôtel sauce; fresh herring, which ought to be surrounded with hot mustard sauce. Sardines are grilled for one or two minutes only; mullet also is grilled. At Bordeaux, they are stuffed with minced bacon, smoked ham, bread-crumbs soaked in broth, sweet herbs minced, and a little lemon juice; all these ingredients being well mixed together, and well spiced. Another way to treat this fish is to cook it on a skewer, à la broche, as it is called in French cookery, and to baste it with bacon fat and lemon juice. Sauce matelote is served with carp, pike, eels, and river fish generally. Gudgeon, smelts, small whiting, and small soles, dabs, and flounders, are fried. Large whiting and middle-sized soles should be cooked au gratin. Fillets may be cut from this latter to serve à la Normande, that is to say, having blanched the fillets, cover them with

Dutch sauce, and garnish with mussels, oysters, crayfish, mushrooms, and sippets of fried bread. One can also put these fillets into a timbale, but they look better when served on a dish, rolled round, which is done with fine string, which has to be removed before serving. Each fillet is surmounted either with a mushroom or a truffle, and in the middle of the dish is placed a little cube of toasted bread, in which matches without their sulphur are stuck, and on which crayfish are impaled. These crayfish have their tails or meaty part shelled, and their heads or beards in the air.

Mackerel en matelote is served as an entrée. Fish so served are cut in slices, laid in this sauce after it is prepared. The sauce is made of a roux, composed of flour and butter, moistened with red wine and broth, maigre or meat, according to the day; from fifteen to twenty little onions, previously peeled, are cooked; mushrooms, spices, a bundle of herbs, an eschalot, a little meat jelly; then, a quarter of an hour before serving, two liqueur glasses of brandy are poured into the matelote, and it is put over the fire.

It is here, at Coulevey, that I saw for the first time the clovis, a shell-fish resembling snails (some sort of cockle or periwinkle). To eat them, one removes them from their shell with a pin. Also a sort of sea-spider, which they kill by plunging it into fresh water for four hours, and afterwards

cook for twenty-five minutes in boiling salted water. They are eaten cold, and contain a sort of marrow, which tastes a little like foie gras; very good.

They served also mussels, with an excellent liaison of cream.

In order that mussels should not disagree, you must know they must be well washed and soaked; then they are opened into a saucepan, set over a moderate fire. The empty side of the shell is thrown away, and the tiny crabs, that are exceedingly indigestible, carefully removed. Then a white sauce is made. It is composed of a teaspoonful of flour mixed with butter, which is not to be browned; water is added, and it is seasoned highly—in the south, chopped garlic and parsley, and in the north, parsley, with a glass of cream thrown in at the moment of serving. In each case they cook some onions in the sauce, and in this sauce they put the mussels for a quarter of an hour, in a closed stewpan; and, made in this way, it is called "à la marinière." When they bind it with the yolk of an egg and a little flour, the sauce is called "à la poulette."

Then they served to us a salad of fresh vegetables, with a good mayonnaise sauce, made with very fresh olive oil, which does not give the salad the strong taste, which sometimes people wrongly attribute to the vegetables, when in reality it is

due to the rancid flavour of inferior oils, which cannot be kept long without spoiling; whereas, olive oil keeps quite sweet for a long time.

For mayonnaise, take the yolks of two eggs, which must be very fresh; pour, drop by drop, fine oil, which one works in with the flat part of the back of a spoon. One requires to be cool, and also patient, over this operation, so as to make this sauce a success. In hot weather it is advisable to stand the vessel, in which the sauce is being made, in the middle of a bowl of cold water, and especially not to hold, with hot hands, the vessel which contains the ingredients, for fear of heating it. When one has a sufficient quantity of the sauce, and has brought it to about the proper thickness, the vinegar is added, drop by drop, which whitens and thins it a little. A little salt, pepper, and mustard are added if one wishes to turn it into a remoulade.

Now supposing it so happens that in the course of making this sauce it turns, that is to say, instead of thickening, it suddenly becomes thin before the addition of the vinegar, and will not take the consistency required, one may still use it by mixing it with the yolks of two more eggs, that is, by, as it were, beginning over again. In this manner nothing is lost, as the mixture advantageously replaces the fresh oil on account of the egg it contains; and, after all,

this state of things rarely happens if one takes the precautions that have here been indicated.

Among the various vegetables that were served, I will merely mention the potatoes à la crème, which is in reality a white sauce made with cream and garnished with small slices of lemon, salsify, and fried artichokes. After having scraped and cut the one into four, and likewise scraped the other, they are dipped into a fine batter and fried. This batter should be prepared an hour in advance. This is how it is done :

Put into a china bowl four dessertspoonfuls of flour, pouring on it, while gently stirring, the yolks of two eggs, a teaspoonful of olive oil, a little liqueur glass of brandy, and add tepid water carefully, until it becomes a moderately thick batter; a pinch of salt should not be omitted. When ready to use it, it is lightened by adding the beaten-up white of an egg, which must not be too much beaten down into the liquid or batter. Vegetables, fish, brains, remains of poultry, dipped into this batter should come out of the frying-pan crisp, and of a light golden brown colour; they must be allowed to drain for a few moments on a sieve sprinkled with salt, and allowed to dry on a coarse linen napkin.

After the vegetables, all sorts of sweets succeeded, in this provincial feast, which lasted over three hours! They served at the young

people's table snow eggs and little cups of cream flavoured with chocolate. These two sweet dishes are a little gone by in fashion, but they are always most acceptable to children.

I will give you the proportions of ingredients which are the same in all custards and creams, and which, therefore, you can always refer to.

For a glass of milk, about a couple of lumps of sugar and one egg. For eight to ten persons it takes about five glasses of milk, which you boil first, as in case of its turning it would be annoying to lose it if it were already mixed with the eggs, sugar, and vanilla. If it is for a vanilla cream, put into the milk to boil a third of a stick of it shredded thin, so that it communicates all its flavour to the milk.

If you prefer a coffee cream then pour into the milk half a glassful of very strong coffee.

If you wish it to be a chocolate cream, pound up two or three sticks of chocolate. It should not be allowed to boil up more than once, twice at the utmost. In the milk, so as to let it melt, put the sugar in the quantities I have indicated up to ten lumps, unless it is for chocolate, which is sweet of itself. Then break each egg separately, so as to be sure each one is quite fresh, and put five, their yolks and whites, into a china basin. Pour in the milk, stirring all the time, pass it all through a sieve,

and then pour it into the little cups and cook them in the bain-marie for a quarter of an hour. If you wish to obtain what may be termed a crème renversée, caramel a tin mould, or a tinned copper one, fill it up with this cream (or custard), and let it cook in the bain-marie for twenty-five minutes. To find out when it is sufficiently done, put in a wooden match (without the sulphur), to which the custard ought not to cling. These creams should be eaten as cold as possible; they are nicer and finer with less white of egg, in which case one has to replace the white by more yolk of egg, and let it cook a little longer, as the white of egg helps the cream to thicken.

An English cream, that is, a custard flavoured with vanilla, poured round the cream when turned out of the mould, gives the dish a more elegant aspect. Custard is commenced like the crème renversée, which has been described above; but instead of pouring the mixture of sweetened milk and egg into a mould, it is returned into a stewpan over a gentle fire, stirring it continually until it becomes of the thickness of a syrup. If it is allowed to boil, even for a second, it turns, that is to say, the egg forms into lumps or congeals. If this happens, turn it at once into a fresh pan, and let it run through a sieve

quickly, which may save it, but one has to be very rapid and skilful over it; and my experience is, that it is much better patiently to stir it from the beginning over a gentle fire; it is slow but sure. Many prefer a coffee cream to the chocolate one, in its liquid state, that is, instead of putting it into a mould one stirs it in a saucepan, just like custard. Be it here said that custard is the base of cabinet puddings, of Bavaroise, of Charlottes, and of egg snow. For to-day I will only tell you the way egg snow is done, as my letter is already long, like that terrible dinner in the provinces at which I assisted, to my great fatigue. Here is the recipe: When the milk has boiled, and been sweetened and flavoured with vanilla, plunge into it by the spoonful the white of egg beaten to a firm snow in pieces as big as the fist; remove these little snowballs, after three or four minutes' cooking, with a skimmer or pierced spoon, place them in a deep dish; then throw the remainder of the milk on to the five yolks of eggs, kept in reserve, pass it all through the sieve, replace it again on the fire and gently stir it, to make a custard, which you herewith pour over your balls of snow.

. . . . Tant dut coûter de peine
Le long enfantement de la grandeur romaine

VIRGIL.

To give this dish, which is rather old-fashioned, a new style, I put these beaten-up whites of egg in a caramelled mould, and let them cook for seven or eight minutes in the bain-marie; then I turn out this floating isle into the vanilla-flavoured custard contained in the bowl or glass dish.

Ah! I shall long remember this terrible Friday's dinner, with its twenty dishes; but that which will fix it yet firmer in my memory is the fact of a little adventure which befell the priests from the country, who had assisted at the feast.

At my aunt's house, be it known, the old habit of finger-glasses is still respected; now, however, they have replaced them by an Oriental ewer, which the butler hands from one guest to the other. He holds, under your hands, a light bronze basin, perforated with holes, which allows the tepid aromatic perfumed water to disappear into a double base. One, then, dries one's hands on a fringed napkin, that he carries for this purpose on his arm. The use of this ewer and basin is common in the East, where they still eat without a fork; and with us, if it is not indispensable, it is at least useful, after crayfish à la Bordelaise, for instance, which it is very difficult to avoid touching with the fingers.

Then the hands are wiped on the fringed napkin carried by the attendant, thus sparing one's

own napkin the disagreeable smell of fish during the rest of the dinner.

When they were offered the rince-bouche—knowing that something had to be done with the opal contents of the little glass which stands in the middle of the finger-bowl—of the real use of which they were evidently in complete ignorance, our country priests cast an uneasy glance to the side of the table where sat their city curé, evidently deciding they would follow in his footsteps. Therefore, directly he carried the glass to his lips, our five ecclesiastics, as one man, guided their own to their lips, and swallowed at a gulp their glassful of tepid water and mint, their heroic smile of satisfaction at having accomplished this duty passing from their faces as their countenances contorted with the horror inspired by the tepid water; but when they saw how the city curé manœuvred at the end of his operation, and they took it all in, their hair seemed to stand on end with despair, and their faces took an expression so disgusted, so haggard, and at the same time so scared, that I was obliged to cling to the edge of the table, so as to prevent myself from joining in the chorus, the fireworks of laughter which exploded in a sort of bouquet from the end of the table occupied by the young people. Never in my life did I have such trouble to remain

serious, and, even as I write, I promise you that the sense of the ludicrous again comes over me, and I cannot avoid laughing anew at the recollection. Let it have the same effect upon you, my dear little friend; gaiety, remember, augments the appetite.

Always Yours.

FOURTH LETTER.

ROSCH HASCHANNAH.

Mosaic cooking—Habits and practices of the Jewish people—Soup, with forcemeat balls—Gherkins cooked in water—Pickled herrings—Cucumber salad—Tomato and beetroot salad—Smoked salmon—Carp in Jewish fashion—How to prevent mushrooms from becoming black—Breasts of geese—Salted beef and tongue—Marvellous tongues—Jelly—Sourcrout—Schaleth of apple—Kouguel pudding—Creams made without milk—Milk of almonds—The Polish Jew and the salmon.

Le plaisir de la table a seul cet avantage,
Qu'il est de tout pays, de tout sexe, et tout âge.

B. S.

THE days of dinners follow one another, but the religions which preside over and order the repast do not resemble each other. Here am I, just returned from my very Catholic chief town, where the strict religious observances of abstinence have almost succeeded in giving me an indigestion, and I arrive here in the height of Rosch Haschannah of the Israelites, by which I mean to say, that although

we are in September, 1890, of the Christian era, we are also in the first of the year 5651, and I am engaged to dine at the house of an Alsatian Jew, to celebrate the festival of the creation of the world. He warned me that I should have to eat according to the laws of Moses, but, as he added that I should not have to repent of it, I accepted with eagerness.

At the present time, the generality of French citizens descended from the Hebrews, instead of from the more or less barbaric people who invaded Gaul after it had been occupied by the Romans, have nearly all abandoned the prescribed rites, enjoined for the sole purpose of avoiding the evils consequent on other times and other climates. Yet, notwithstanding, some of them still, by filial reverence for the Faith which their ancestors scrupulously observed, consent still to submit to the difficult Mosaic prescriptions. These do not infringe above all on feast days, on a touching custom which obliges each member of a family to be reconciled when following the lines of a gay gastronomic poet:

L'esprit le plus chagrin, l'être le plus rugueux,
Sent à l'aspect des mets que son humeur chancelle.
Car toujours querelles de gueux
Se raccommodent à l'écuelle.

Is it from a horror of what is ugly, or from purely sanitary reasons, that Moses has prohibited

the appearance of repulsive-looking animals on all tables? I think it is a little of both. All I can tell you is that, setting aside that unclean creature the name of which is used to designate people who are uncleanly, crawfish, lobsters, oysters, crabs, mussels, shrimps, and prawns are excluded by Jewish law from their cookery, without counting several other animals, or parts of animals, that are considered impure (treyfa).

It is a fact that, at the present time, after grave consideration and setting gourmandise aside, these creatures have been strongly accused by the faculty of being the cause of various diseases.

The fish admitted to the table of the orthodox must have scales and fins, therefore they eat no frogs nor eels. The butchers have to bleed to death, not knock down and slaughter beasts, in order, no doubt, to prevent their too rapid corruption in hot climates; moreover there are special slaughter-houses (schochet) which a special officer is obliged carefully and constantly to visit, and by affixing his seal to guarantee that the animals were free from any outward defect or illness. When the carcases are sold, they have to be first purified by a bath of fresh water, and next by an ablution of salt. Under no pretext is the flesh mixed with either butter or milk, by reason of the Biblical precept,

"Thou shalt not seethe the kid in its mother's milk," which expounders and Pharisaical casuists have developed to the utmost by extending the prohibition even to preventing the mixing of butter with meat. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals should here shed a tear of compassionate tenderness. Briefly, the repast "following the law" (kischer) must be composed of aliments dressed entirely in fat, or else absolutely without meat or meat gravy. The crockery, the kitchen utensils, the plate, and even the kitchen tables, on which are deposited the viands, are classified as "tables to receive the meat, or animal food," and tables "to receive other aliments."

Of this traditional repast, I will only cite the dishes that one does not meet with everywhere, some of which would bring to our ordinary commissariat a very agreeable variety. I shall not describe the dishes that in all essentials resemble those of our ordinary cookery. Broth or bouillon with forcemeat balls, gherkins cooked in water, pickled herrings, carp in Jewish fashion, slices of smoked salmon, the breasts of geese in slices, Hamburg smoked beef, Alsatian cabbage, and ditto green haricot beans, schaleth of apples, and kouguel pudding.

The forcemeat balls that are put into soup are made with two ounces of crust of bread, moistened with broth, and beaten up. They

squeeze this bread in a cloth, and mix it with two or three teaspoonfuls of beef marrow. This paste is then taken off the fire, and allowed to get tepid, in which state it is mixed with two eggs, salt, pepper, and nutmeg, and then it is formed into balls and rolled in flour. These forcemeat balls are then put into the frying-pan with a little hot marrow, and when they have become a golden colour they are taken off the fire, and put, at the moment of serving, into the soup.

In France, gherkins (in water), or green cucumbers, in their season, are packed in a small cognac barrel with the head knocked out, or in large earthenware jars. They are rather strongly salted, and with them are put pepper, young vine-leaves or tendrils of the vine, branches of fennel, and about half a pint of vinegar to slightly acidulate the twenty-five quarts of water with which the gherkins are completely covered. The vessels are hermetically sealed up, ready to open when the gherkins are required, which must not be for a fortnight at least. When the little barrel is fastened up, it has to be kept filled with fresh water, and skimmed at the top, because of the white scum which rises at the surface. These gherkins have no relationship to pickled gherkins. They are not acid, or, at least, very little so, and they have a fresh,

aromatic flavour. They make a very good condiment to eat with meat, and can be kept several months if they are not exposed to the air.

Smoked salmon, and the breasts of geese smoked, are generally, in France, to be bought of the vendors of Alsatian and Jewish comestibles. These hors-d'œuvres are eaten raw, and cut into infinitesimally thin slices, almost as thin as tissue paper. Pickled herrings are also, in France, to be bought at the grocers'. They are white salted herrings, and have to be chosen soft-roed. They are allowed to remain for twenty-four hours in cold water, which has to be renewed several times; then they scrape them, and put them into a low jar, with rings of raw onion, peppercorns, cloves, and red pepper, together with some laurel-leaves, a little water, and just a little fine oil on the top. They may be eaten the next day, if desired, but remain good for a whole week. At the time of serving, they are cut into two or three little slices, and put into a hors-d'œuvre dish, adding the roes, crushed in a little of the pickle, only a few drops of vinegar, a teaspoonful of milk, then passed through a sieve. At luncheon, accompanied with thin slices of brown bread and butter, they make an exquisite hors-d'œuvre.

To make fillets of herring in oil, scald for a few moments some dried and smoked herrings, soaking them in water for six hours; then take

out the bones, cut long fillets, and put them into a bottle of olive oil.

If you wish to have a really good salad of white cucumbers, cut them, yourself, into the thinnest rounds, as thin, and almost as transparent, as vegetable paper. Remove the pips as far as possible, and place the slices on a sieve. Salt them a little heavily, and put them on a plate with a weight at the top, so as to squeeze out as much water as possible. Then mix the cucumber, like any other salad, with oil and vinegar, and, above all, do not spare the pepper. Much in the same way you can make a salad of tomatoes. You need not drain them, but they must be well wiped before slicing them horizontally; add to their seasoning a little minced sweet herbs. If you like beetroot salad, buy them ready cooked, put them into pure vinegar, and, at the moment of helping yourself, add oil, salt, and pepper as you like. These three salads are looked upon more as condiments, and are generally served in hors-d'œuvre dishes.

Carp, served in the Jewish fashion, reserves for the Gentile a surprise as agreeable as it is unexpected, for the fish comes to table cold, in a succulent jelly!

Big carp are most appreciated; therefore, if one wishes to produce a fine large fish, and can only procure the smaller-sized ones, we have to make

use of a little deception. Out of two ordinary-sized carp one manufactures one large one, by the simple expedient of taking away one head and one tail; it being, of course, understood, that the fish is cut into slices and adjusted on a dish, before being covered with its jelly. You salt a carp one hour in advance, having washed it and taken off the scales. It is then cut into little slices, and placed in a stewpan on a bed of sliced onion (five or six fine onions, moistened with five teaspoonfuls of good olive oil). The fish is then sprinkled with a handful of flour, salt, pepper, mixed spices, and an imperceptible morsel of garlic and eschalot is then added, and the fish is entirely covered with cold water. Some mushrooms are then peeled, and there is added also their peel, well washed, which contains much of their aroma and savour. During this time, so that the mushrooms do not blacken, put them into water acidulated with lemon-juice and mixed with a teaspoonful of flour. When the fish has cooked gently for twenty-five or thirty minutes, take out the pieces and arrange them on a dish, as if the creature were whole. The sauce is allowed to reduce, and cook for another hour; and then it is pounded in the mortar, and afterwards passed through a tammy, and poured over the fish, after having cooked the mushrooms in it for ten minutes. This dish is better when prepared the day before, so that the sauce is a stiff jelly.

It should be seasoned, and made thick enough so as to form a jelly easily.

If the woman of Israel had made Titus eat of this dish, never would he have made up his mind to destroy the Temple at Jerusalem.

If you wish to imitate at home meat salted in the way they do it at Hamburg, order from the butcher a piece of brisket of beef, cut from a fine large bullock. See that you get the middle of the brisket, very thick. This piece of meat, which is sold at a low price, is the material with which one can make excellent broth and soup. It is streaked with fat, the meat being fine and tender. It must be boned before it is salted.

Put into a deep dish, soup-tureen, salad-bowl, or earthenware pot, a piece of beef weighing six or seven pounds, after its having been well rubbed with about two ounces of powdered saltpetre, so as to give it a fine red colour. Then rub the meat with five or six good handfuls of salt, a teaspoonful of freshly ground pepper, and one or two little cloves of garlic. The meat is then covered with a plate, surmounted by a weight. The beef is turned every day, not forgetting to replace the weight, so that the meat should be well kept down in its brine. At the end of a fortnight in winter, or ten or twelve days when the weather is warmer (for this dish must not be made in the summer), the beef is taken out of the salting-pot. It is tied

up with string, and a little of the brine is put to enough water to allow it to cook gently, like a pot-au-feu. At the end of four or five hours of slow boiling, it is taken off and allowed to cool. One has to assure oneself it is thoroughly done, either by finding out if a fork goes into it easily, or else by tasting it; if it does not resist the fork it is sufficiently done.

This beef is cut into thin slices; the border of fat is left on, the same as one leaves the fat on the outside of a ham. This dish will keep quite well for a week.

An ox-tongue salted is dressed in much the same way, but one reduces the proportions of brine, and also the time of cooking.

When there is a hearth or fireplace in the kitchen, one may smoke the aforesaid pieces before finally cooking them. When they are taken out of the salt they are hung in the chimney on a hook, placed high enough so as not to catch the heat of the fire, but that it may be reached or caught by the smoke produced by the sawdust thrown from time to time upon the fire. One, two, or three weeks, according to circumstances, is the time it takes to smoke the meats sufficiently, according to their being liked more or less done. These sorts of dried provisions are a great resource in a country house.

I have given the name of "marvellous tongue"

to a salted tongue, which I convert into a real little galantine. Before cooking it I split it, not into slices but underneath only. I place fillets of chicken, of wild rabbit, slices of ham, of veal, strips of bacon, a little white forcemeat, or pounded calf's liver; the whole enveloped in a slice of bacon, slightly salted and seasoned with a clove and some nutmeg powdered, a sprig of thyme finely minced, and some truffles or pistachio nuts, according to the season. I then sew the tongue up and put it in a little cloth, also stitched up, and cook it in the ordinary way. If I wish to have a jelly to put round it I add to its broth, while it is cooking, some vegetables taken out of the pot-au-feu, and a small piece of the knuckle of veal, or a pound of shin of beef and half a calf's foot. When the tongue is taken out I throw the whites of two eggs beaten to a snow, into the broth to clarify it, that is if I want it white, adding a colouring ball if I wish it to be brown. The liquid is then passed through a cloth, the fat is taken off, and it is put to cool. The next day it has become a thick jelly, and the dish is decorated with it; by dipping the tongue into the lukewarm jelly it gets coated over with a fine layer of glaze.

Cabbage cooked in the Alsatian way has first to be blanched for an hour, then finely

minced up, well flavoured, and put into a stewpan with some fat. It should remain on the fire for four or five hours, together with some Frankfort sausage and some saveloy sausage without garlic, smoked ham, and bacon; unless, indeed, one fears to transgress on this point the law of Moses and the Prophets. An hour before serving the dish is covered with peeled potatoes, which cook in the steam of the cabbage. From the fact of cooking these things so long they lose the properties hurtful to digestion. Sourcrout can be used in the same manner, but before cooking it should be carefully washed, first in cold and then in hot water, to draw from it the too great acidity; these rinsings replace the blanching of the fresh cabbage.

When French beans are in season, and are too large to be sautés, they may also be used in the Alsatian way. They have to be carefully picked and split, then put into hot fat, in which onions have already been partly cooked; salt and pepper are added, and the stewpan is covered closely. The beans are allowed to simmer for three-quarters of an hour to an hour. They cover them with peeled potatoes, which cook for half an hour, and then serve the vegetables, which are very good, although the process of stewing makes them lose their fine colour.

Kouguel pudding is a kind of plum pudding

baked in a mould, instead of being boiled, as in England. It does not look anything particular, because in cooking it becomes black outside. Kouguel pudding is a good solid sweet. It inspires me with more confidence when I know that it has been made by the white hands of the mistress of the house, as one has to thoroughly beat together the following ingredients: One pound of bread-crumbs, a half-pound of flour, a half-pound of suet or beef marrow, a pound of powdered sugar, or, what is preferable, moist sugar; a quarter of a pound of Malaga raisins, a quarter of a pound of currants, well picked and cleaned, a pinch of salt, three pinches of powdered cinnamon, and two pieces of sugar that have been well rubbed on the rind of a lemon. When all these things are thoroughly amalgamated a tinned copper mould is buttered and filled with the mixture, and it is allowed to remain for four or five hours in the oven, which must not be too hot, care being taken to pour every now and then a wine-glassful of water into the mould, and to turn the pudding round so that it does not burn. When served it may have rum poured over it, which the mistress of the house sets on fire at the table. It should be served very hot, and must not be brought into the room alight, as this so often is the cause of serious accidents.

I apply this observation equally to an omelette with rum.

I will also give you the recipe of another excellent sweet of which I partook that same day; it is called schaleth of apples. To make it about eight apples are peeled, they are then cut into small thin rounds, and mixed with five yolks of eggs nicely sweetened with seven or eight teaspoonfuls of powdered sugar, and as many whites of eggs beaten up; a little vanilla is added, which should be finely cut up with good scissors. This mixture is put into an oiled mould and allowed to cook for about four hours. It must be turned and moistened a little from time to time, and each half-hour have added a teaspoonful of butter, which both prevents its sticking to the mould and gives it richness. This schaleth is served hot. The next day one can serve up any which may be left, cold, cut in slices, and it is equally good.

The Jews know how to make creams without milk, which they replace either by weak coffee, or water chocolate, or else milk of almonds; they use more eggs than we do for these creams.

At this moment I remember how my strict Catholic country neighbours taught me to make this milk of almonds. They use it during Holy Week, when in their dioceses the use of milk, butter, and eggs is not allowed.

You must scald, peel, and pound the almonds with water, in a marble mortar, passing the liquid through a white cloth. It is then made use of in the same way as milk.

To end my letter, I ought to tell you some of the numerous anecdotes about the Polish Jews which were told us on the 1st of Tisri, at the table of these children of Israel. I can only recall one, which confirms my opinion as to the gastronomic taste which, I maintain, is generally to be found among the devout.

One day, a poor, miserable Polish Jew solicited charity from a pious Israelite. The beggar, in order to move the rich man to the deed of mercy, said plaintively that he ought to regale his poor family, for the love of God, because it was a feast day. The devout Jew listened to the request of the beggar, and granted the alms. But, what was the benefactor's astonishment, when, on passing before a restaurant, he saw his beggar friend sitting at a table with a dish of salmon before him! Entering, he exclaimed wrathfully to the man: "You should not spend the money I gave you for the honour of God, and to celebrate our feast, on such an expensive fish." "Alas!" replied the other, "I love salmon! When I have no money, I cannot eat salmon; when I have money, I must not eat salmon. When, then, my dear sir, would you

have me eat salmon to the honour of the Creator?" The devout Israelite, who was no doubt a gourmand to some degree, was so touched by this argument that he at once sent for some more salmon for the poor man to take home with him, so as to regale all his family on it, to the end that more lips should render praise to the Almighty.

Adieu, my dear child.

FIFTH LETTER.

COUNTRY FARE.

Country fare—Meats in the country—Preserved articles of food—Their use—Tinned fish, lobster—Vegetables—Pines—Plum pudding—Sambaglione sauce—Goose, Turkey—Dried cod—Brandade of cod—A word about the culinary matters of our neighbours—Roast beef as served in England—Potatoes—Macaroni and rice—Milanaise timbale—Tomato sauce—Fowl à la chipolata—Salted leg of mutton—Mushrooms—Cream cheese.

Voulez-vous des amis ?
Ayez une table à rallonges.
A table bien servie on en compte beaucoup.

I WRITE to you this time, my dear child, from my home in the Landes, where I arrived in the middle of September for the sake of the vintage.

It is here that one is obliged to exercise foresight and ingenuity, so as to be equal to the terribly thorny situation from the commissariat point of view. My butcher lives twelve miles away, and my baker five miles. You can judge

of the rest. Therefore, to guard against unforeseen circumstances, I am obliged to have a quantity of preserved provisions in my store-room. Without their help, when my shooting friends come and take me unawares, I should indeed be very troubled to feed them properly, and I do greatly like hospitality, especially when I offer it myself.

Car la table est de l'amitié
La plus fidèle entremetteuse ;
Que j'en pourrais citer maint exemple au besoin !
L'amitié se réchauffe au feu de la cuisine,
Et j'irai même encor plus loin ;
Il n'est d'amis que ceux avec lesquels on dîne.

These lines are certainly rather doggerel, but the gastronomic Muse, who evidently inspires them, prides itself only on being a bonne vivante.

To augment my resources, I have, then, always a quantity of these preserved provisions ; those of game, fowl, tongue, and pork offer no difficulties of explanation. Now for preserved vegetables, some precautions have to be taken. I will point them out to you. First, you must have a little instrument which is made expressly to prevent one from jagging the cover of the tins of vegetables, etc., in opening them. When the vegetables are extracted from their cases, throw them into a coarse strainer, pour some boiling water over them, drain them, put them back again into

their tin case, which put into the bain-marie. A little before serving add a piece of fresh butter mixed up with some finely chopped parsley, salt and pepper to taste, and the vegetables should not be put into a stewpan in direct contact with the fire. This method has to be strictly adhered to, in order to prevent the vegetables from cooking a second time, and thus contracting the taste of warmed-up food. I find in my cupboards limbs of preserved geese that I did last December, at the time of year which admits of poultry being fattened without tormenting them. This is the way that one makes here what is called "le confit," and which applies equally to turkeys, pigs, and geese. You cut the members of the various animals in pieces, you put them into salt for the whole of a night, and then cook it in its own fat, obtained from the body of the animal and melted down at a moderate heat. If the pieces are not covered completely, add enough lard to fill up the saucepan; afterwards being assured that they are sufficiently cooked, by trying them with a fork, put them into jars, covering them with their fat. In order to preserve them from all contact with the outer air, fill up the jars with more lard. Liver does not take so long a time to cook. Preserved turkey is done with the grease of geese, and that of fillets, or the best parts of pork, in melted pig's fat.

The pieces which are taken, as required, out of the jars, have to be sautés in a stewpan and served with fried parsley, or potatoes browned in goose grease, or else slightly warmed up so as to remove their fatty covering, and eaten cold. This dish is a valuable resource, and much appreciated in the South.

I have also some tins of pickled lampreys. The provision warehouses of Bordeaux, which are renowned, have depôts nearly everywhere where they can be obtained. It is enough when one wants to use them, to heat the fish in its sauce. Preserved lobster may be mixed without further preparation with a green salad, garnished with hard-boiled eggs, and anchovies if they are liked, and potatoes. As to cod, these preserved fish are very serviceable in varying considerably the maigre menu for Fridays. Dried cod must be kept hanging up. When it is going to be served, a piece must be soaked for twenty-four hours beforehand, and the water changed very frequently. It is eaten with its classic crown of potatoes steamed, that is to say, in an iron saucepan which is called a steamer, in which is put very little water and salt. Potatoes cooked in a quantity of water, are neither white nor floury. Cod ought not to be allowed to boil, or it will become hard; it should only simmer in the water. It is eaten either with white sauce,

or melted butter, or oil and vinegar; very little vinegar should be used, to avoid its being made tough. It is also prepared very agreeably en Brandade, that is to say, by mashing it up in butter—I suppress the time-honoured garlic, as it is not to the taste of everybody—and by alternate layers of the pounded cod, with a layer of potato. Then the whole is put on a buttered dish and covered over with bread-crumbs, buttered, and baked in a slow oven; a little salt and a grain of pepper.

I have some tinned pines, which are now to be got so wonderfully cheap, though it is not so astonishing when one knows that throughout America this fruit, which is the quintessence of a luxury with us, is there the usual food of the pigs. By adding sugar to its own juice, I make a little syrup beforehand, which cooks a good quarter of an hour, and which I let cool round the fruit.

Also, I have some little English plum puddings of all sizes. When out of their moulds, I put them for nearly a quarter of an hour in the oven to warm them completely through, and sometimes, instead of lighting them up with rum, I pour over them a sambaglione sauce, which one of my friends, an Italian, taught me. You make it by beating up three or four yolks of egg, with three or four teaspoonfuls of powdered

sugar, and a little good white wine; this mixture is placed on a slow fire, as it must not boil, then pour on it the rest of the bottle of wine, beating the sambaglione with a fork, or, better still, with a chocolate or egg whisk very quickly. In five or six minutes the sauce will thicken to the consistency of a cream and froth up nicely. It can be used with a rice pudding as well as with plum pudding, and can also be served in claret-glasses, or custard-cups, as a sweet dish made either with Grave, or another white wine, which is a little sweeter. One of my Italian friends used to use a good bottle of Marsala. Ah, my Italian friend has well trained me in the making of certain dishes of the country, which have long since become naturalised in France, as without this naturalisation I would not speak of them to you, having promised myself not to become cosmopolitan, even in culinary matters.

Besides which, I claim (being a Frenchwoman) that in these matters—as in all others of civilisation, refinement, of art, and of taste—that our dear France is always at the head of the movement. Do not laugh because you see me putting patriotism even into my stove! "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are," has been said by a philosopher of the palate. He had travelled — this philosopher — and had learned on what pastures other nationalities fed.

I do not speak of the "upper ten," who in all countries more or less imitate us, no matter what they say to the contrary; but of the middle classes—let us pity them, and be careful not to imitate them.

One must have lived, as I have done, on the other side of the Channel, to know the presumption of the before-mentioned English roast beef, cooked without salt, and with merely hot water poured over it before being served. It is the produce of an ox, eighteen months or two years old — too young — without muscle, never having worked, and fattened on linseed cake, which gives it the fat of a thickness like that of an English pig! Ah, I know that I throw stones at a prepossession—that of "English roast beef!" When one has not partaken of it in a thoroughbred English family of the United Kingdom, one can still believe in it; but to have eaten, there, in England, in the oxen's own country, surrounded by any quantity of vegetables, all cooked in water, and served, at the same time as the meat, on an enormous plate, throws a chill on the admiration that certain people blindly profess for exotic productions. The English endeavour to persuade you into liking roast beef by generously passing you the salt-cellars, pepper-boxes, the pickles, and the hottest of cold sauces. But all this fails to console one for the absence of salt

during its cooking! What monotony there must be in the eternal sauces which made Talleyrand, that diplomatic gourmet, say, on returning from London: "Strange country; so many sects, and only one sauce!"

The plain boiled potatoes which appear at each meal, either in Germany or in England, are enough to disgust one completely, if genius did not step out to happily vary the preparation of them. Proteus himself was not susceptible to more transformations than the potato is capable of undergoing under our influence. Glory be to the culinary artists — those brilliant collaborators of Parmentier who invented potatoes sautées, à la maître d'hôtel, in ragout, with cream, in purée, with cheese, in croquettes, etc., not forgetting the incomparable potato fried, and soufflée!

Do you know how to do it—this last one? It is very simple, and yet one rarely gets it well done, except at a restaurant, because at home one does not always possess a pan large enough to contain a great quantity of fat, in which the potatoes do not touch each other. If one has such a vessel, melt the fat in it. The fat should be very hot, but not at the point to at once fry completely that which is plunged in it. The potatoes must be only half-cooked. They are cut into flat slices, about the thickness

of a penny-piece. In this form they are taken out with a skimmer, and placed on a strainer, where they are allowed to drain and cool. At this moment the fat is made to fry quickly. One then assures oneself it is ready, as I have explained to you in my third letter, and you then re-plunge the half-cooked potatoes into it, until they swell up, become yellow, and slightly crisp.

If they do not swim sufficiently far apart in the fat, and adhere to one another, they cannot become soufflées. If there are too many at the same time in the frying-pan they will never succeed. In dishing, sprinkle them over with fine salt, and serve them quickly. I have disclosed to you the secret of potatoes soufflées, as precious as the recipe of Sèvres blue!

Here are the right proportions for obtaining good croquettes of potato, or, as they are called here, "pommes duchesse." Two pounds of boiled potatoes, passed through a sieve, and mixed with a good spoonful of butter, with the yolks of two eggs, and salt and pepper. Add the two whites of egg, beaten into a firm snow, and form with this paste some balls, either flat, or long, or round, as you like, and fry them.

In the various ragouts of potato, the long sort are most generally used, as less likely to break up. When they are boiled, and cut into slices, they are thrown into various sauces. For

purées, on the contrary, round potatoes are required, this kind being more floury and tender.

So as to obtain good sautées potatoes, it is important to choose them much of a size.

A sauté-pan of tinned copper, the edges of which are slightly raised, must be used. Put in a good piece of butter—let it be too much rather than too little—and arrange the potatoes flat, so that they do not lie one above the other.

They are then cooked over a moderate fire, in the sauté-pan, without its lid. At the end of ten or fifteen minutes, cover the sauté-pan closely, so that the concentrated steam makes the potatoes soft inside.

When they are nearly cooked, uncover them, and continue cooking them over a bright fire, so that they take a beautiful colour; and, in order that they brown all round, you must turn them constantly, one by one, with a fork.

Let us return to our Italian dishes. I only quote two, which, as I have already said, have passed into our culinary use—macaroni and rice.

Why is it that on most ordinary tables macaroni is not thready?

It is because the cook puts the cheese into the stewpan, and then leaves it to cook. It therefore runs into oil, or forms into balls, or falls to the bottom of the dish, does not mix properly, does not become marrow-like, of the

softness which, under the form of light and tangled threads, gives to well-made macaroni its richness and its delicacy.

When Italian pastes have boiled in very slightly salted water for a quarter of an hour, drain them, sauté them quickly in butter for one minute only, and it is just at the instant when it is to be poured out into the dish that you sprinkle the macaroni over with grated cheese, shaking it well up and down, and, above all, taking care that the saucepan is not replaced on the fire. Without this precaution, no macaroni is thread-like. Do not economise the Gruyère; two ounces, at least, of grated cheese for six or eight persons, and more than that quantity of Parmesan. The cheese ought to be dry to grate easily. In these days, the shopkeepers do this little operation of grating the cheese by machinery, so that in Paris, when a cook perceives, at the last moment, that her consommé is not of the first quality, she procures at once some of this grated cheese, with which she disguises its imperfection, serving it at table in a hors-d'œuvre dish, or any other little dish.

Before putting the cheese in the macaroni, as explained above, and which is called "à l'Italienne," probably because it is never eaten like this in Italy, you can really make it an Italian dish by pouring over it a thick tomato sauce.

The cheese, in this case, is only introduced after the tomato.

When you make a Milanaise timbale, you add to the macaroni the cockscombs and kidneys, tiny sausages (chipolata, ordered to be prepared beforehand), cooked ham cut into dice, some blanched champignons — that is to say, champignons boiled for a short time in water to which a little vinegar is added, and mixed with a little flour, so that they do not blacken — some truffles, cut into rounds and cooked for about ten minutes in white wine, or in butter; and to finish, some little pieces of foie gras mixed with the other ingredients ten minutes before serving, thickens the Milanaise admirably. These diverse ingredients have to cook for some minutes in a little roux, moistened with some meat jelly or any good extract of meat. I repeat that the cheese is only added at the moment of pouring the whole into a raised crust. This latter can be that of a pâté de foie gras, of which the pâté has been eaten recently, or a pastry-case ordered from a pastry-cook. But it is so easy to make, and costs so little, that my cook prefers making it herself. She uses a paste made of half a pound of flour, the yolk of one egg, a quarter of a pound of butter, a pinch of salt, and a gill of water. She works it up, and flattens it out to the thickness of half an inch with the rolling-pin, which she

has dredged with a little fine flour, and lines a mould specially made for it. This mould is in the form of a low tower, and is divided by means of hinges into two parts lengthways. When the sides of the mould are lined, you keep up the middle of the pâté by filling it either with dried beans, or by putting in a jam-pot. It must be cooked in a moderate oven, for twenty or twenty-five minutes, then take it out of the mould, and brush over with the yolk of an egg. This is called gilding it. It is then replaced in the oven for five minutes, and the timbale is ready to receive its garnishing of macaroni à la Milanaise.

The difference between rice cooked in the Italian way and that cooked in the French manner is, that the former, instead of being in a paste, remains in grains, having the form of little X's, which shows that it is just cooked as it should be. If you really like rice, you will choose one of the manners of dressing it that I am going to tell you of.

For the Italian way, for six to eight persons, put into a stewpan two or three spoonfuls of butter or of fat; as soon as it has melted, brown some minced onions, then add five spoonfuls of rice, which you will cover either with stock or water, and as the rice swells, you add some more of the liquid; at the end of twenty minutes the

rice is cooked. For the Egyptian way you blanch the same quantity of rice for five minutes, and then allow it to simmer from forty to forty-five minutes, with butter and salt, and a very little cayenne pepper. For the Turkish way, when the rice is half cooked, you add to it a piece of saffron. Let it steam, and with the handle of a wooden spoon make holes in it, which are filled with butter or bouillon.

Rice has only its full qualities when it is in grains, and not crushed. I like it sprinkled over with cheese like macaroni. It is excellent, too, with tomato sauce, which hides its natural insipidity a little.

Tomato sauce is made by breaking up some tomatoes and letting them cook and reduce for a long time; they are then passed through a sieve, and thickened with a little roux highly flavoured, on which you pour it. Bottles of preserved tomatoes are to be bought, which are just as good as fresh ones.

When you put into the body of a fowl some rice nearly cooked, some chipolata sausages, and a little smoked Bayonne ham, cut into slices, the flavour is greatly heightened. This fowl à la chipolata is cooked in its own gravy. When it is lightly browned with butter or goose fat, with some small onions, a bunch of herbs, and a spoonful of flour, and moistened with stock

until you half cover the fowl, cover the stewpan closely. After a couple of hours' slow cooking, more or less, according to the quality of the fowl, it is taken out, the gravy is reduced and thickened, it is strained, and mixed with a thick tomato sauce, which gives it just the right sharpness.

I must now say good-bye, dear child. I hear barking getting nearer, and have an idea that it is the celebrated pack of hounds belonging to the Baron de C. L——. If it is he and his five cousins, there is nothing to be done but to run to the cellar to fetch my best Médoc, and to the barn where I have buried some game in the barley, which preserves it, and then to the poultry-yard to have a couple of ducks killed. What luck that just now there is a leg of mutton which has been pickling for the last three days in white wine, and is well spiced with its own brine. I shall make a chevreuil sauce, and shall have something to offer at once to the cruel teeth of my hunters. The fowl, to be tender, ought to hang for a day or two.

A peasant has just brought me a basket of mushrooms. I shall just put them to heat through on the grill at a slow fire for five minutes, then I shall throw them into some oil (not too hot) with some chopped garlic, parsley, and lemon-juice in it. I am going to regale my Gascons well. You

know that preserved mushrooms are treated just in the same way as fresh ones, only you change the oil, and warm them through only, as they are already cooked.

Just this morning, I have had some new milk curdled, by putting into it a little piece of rennet, with the intention of making a good cream cheese. The curds are hung up to drain in a thin cloth. It will have to be passed through a sieve, and some thick sweet cream added to it. It will remain two or three hours in a wicker heart-shaped basket, lined with muslin, which serves to turn it out nicely. Covered with some good fresh cream, it will be the cause of my receiving some compliments this evening, I am sure.

A bientôt.

SIXTH LETTER.

COUNTRY FARE—*continued.*

Butter à la minute—Pancakes—Grilled artichokes—Artichokes à la barigoule—Savoy biscuits—Galette—Butterkuchen, pound cake, cream tart, paste for fruit tarts—The oven for baking pastry—Ice—Whipped cream—Iced Bavarois—Mousse of chocolate—Apple mousse—Rice à l'Impératrice—Charlotte Russe—Mont-blanc—Liqueur jellies—Care to be given to turning out jellies—Aspics or chaufroix of fish ; of fowl ; of foies gras—jelly of meat or fowl.

L'homme riche, qui ne sait pas donner à dîner à ses amis, ne sait pas jouir de sa fortune.

CARÊME.

MY DEAR CHILD,

My sporting friends have lengthened their sojourn here for a week. I like to believe that they found themselves well off. A letter, giving me notice of their arrival, has evidently miscarried. I, therefore, was taken unawares, but was not unprovided for, as in the country I keep myself always a little prepared. However, my cook having just gone to a fête in the neighbourhood with the gardener,

her customary assistant, we were all obliged to put a hand to the work. You would have laughed had you seen the men shaking away at a decanterful of cream to make butter. The gardener, before starting off, had locked up the churn, which had to be replaced at all costs. After shaking the cream for twenty minutes the butter began to come, and each one put his eye to the neck of the decanter and looked in. But a little more patience was still required before the rich substance separated itself, at first in little pieces, then completely, from the buttermilk, in which it is well to triturate it before the final washing separates it completely. While the butter is still soft it easily passes the neck of the decanter, and you wash it in a pan which you have rubbed with a handful of raw sorrel, as well as the spoon with which you work it. The sorrel prevents the butter from sticking, and it is as well to prevent this loss when you have only a small quantity.

The gentlemen actually wished to toss pancakes in a pan. No young sportsman exists who does not boast of having succeeded wonderfully well. I cannot say that some were not dropped into the ashes, but the good humour and the laughter fully compensated for the small misfortune.

Pancakes are made with half a pound of flour, in which six eggs are beaten, as for an omelette;

you add two teaspoonfuls of brandy, one of olive oil, a pinch of salt, a little orange-flower water, some zest of lemon, or, better still, some vanilla, cut fine with a pair of scissors. You add one pint and a half of milk, mixing it till it is the consistency of thick cream, and let it rest for an hour or two. The batter should be smooth and without lumps.

Then rub the bottom of the frying-pan with a little bag of linen containing butter; pour in the batter so that it covers the bottom of the pan thinly. It is cooked on one side in a minute or two, and it is then that, shaking the frying-pan handle, you loosen the pancake and toss it, so as to turn it and cook it on the other side. I generally place each pancake on a separate plate, after having dredged it with castor sugar. When they are piled up, instead of remaining dry they become soft and moist, and the sugar melts.

One of our sportsmen cooked us some artichokes in quite an unexpected manner, and which did not fail, at first, to inspire me with a little anxiety. He put them simply to cook on the grill, whole, over a moderate fire, only putting between the leaves of the heart a little oil, and salt, and pepper.

After twenty or twenty-five minutes' cooking, when he himself brought me his artichokes, I was obliged to admit they were incomparably

better than the ordinary way, and that they had, by this method, preserved much better their natural savour than if they had been blanched, or à la barigoule, or sautés. You cut the latter into four and do them as you would sauté chicken.

As to artichokes à la barigoule, here is the recipe: Cut the points of the leaves, and boil the vegetables; take out the choke, which you replace by a little chopped bacon mixed with mushrooms, garlic, and parsley. Tie string round them, warm them up in oil, moisten them with a glass of white wine or a little stock, bind them with a roux, and cook them in their gravy, which a slice of ham wonderfully improves.

My young improvised cook also made us a good Savoy cake, composed of the yolks of four eggs, mixed first with three teaspoonfuls of powdered sugar and two ounces of rice flour, a little chopped vanilla, and added four whites of eggs beaten up firm; he buttered a mould, in which he poured the whole, and placed it on a slow fire covered with cinders, and under the four de campagne well supplied with more cinders. The cake rose rapidly, and was cooked in twenty minutes.

My aunt and cousins were each taken by the idea, and each one made their favourite cake. It was a veritable competition. The galette served

with the coffee received an honourable mention; here is the recipe:

Two lumps of sugar and a pinch of salt in half a glassful of water; pour it into the hollow made in half a pound of flour. Work it up with a piece of butter the size of a walnut; spread out the paste, roll it, dredge it with flour, fold it lightly in four, like a carelessly folded table-napkin; leave it for ten minutes; open it out, and spread over it an ounce of butter; recommence the working and spreading out five times, letting it be ten minutes, adding an ounce of butter each time. At the end of an hour you will have finished your galette, which is cooked for half an hour in a hot oven. With this same flaky paste pie-crusts are made; but I prefer the crumbling crust of a certain short paste, which softens less under a layer of fruit, and which by itself constitutes an excellent dry cake.

This is how you make the paste resembling a butterkuchen, an Alsatian word, meaning a butter cake. Crush half a pound of butter with an egg, a quarter of a pound of powdered sugar, and work in gradually half a pound of flour to the mixture until the paste leaves the basin; flavour it with cinnamon. When well worked, spread out the paste to the thickness of one or two inches on an iron plate or floured mould, then put it into the oven. Let it cook for five

minutes, take it out and mark it into divisions deeply with a knife, for when well cooked it is brittle, and without this precaution you cannot slice it neatly. Put it back again in the oven for twenty-five minutes, and when taking out the cake powder it with coarsely pounded sugar, cinnamon, and some chopped almonds, if you like them.

The pound cake, though good, was found more ordinary. It is made by mixing first four eggs and their weight of sugar together, and then adding the same weight of flour, the same weight of butter, and a little vanilla. It is baked just the same as a Savoy cake, in a buttered mould for twenty minutes.

But it was the cream tart which carried off the first prize for household confectionery. I will tell you how I make it. I take half a pound of flour, a quarter of a pound of butter, two ounces of sugar, and one egg. First, I mix the egg with the butter, then I add the flour, mixed with the sugar. I flour a mould and spread out the paste, keeping the edges well up to contain the cream. The cream is composed of a bowl of thick fresh cream, three eggs (yolks and whites), a quarter of a pound of sugar, and a little chopped vanilla. I mix this and pour the whole into the paste, which I put into a quick oven for half an hour. The

stumbling-block of all these cakes is the oven. It is rare to find one which cooks pastry well underneath. I remedy this inconvenience by placing my cakes inside the oven on a tripod, underneath which I place live coals covered over with ashes. This makes the cakes crisp. If you do not take care to heat the shelf on which the cake is placed, the under side of the pastry remains soft and uncoloured, for humidity having a tendency always to descend, and meeting with a cold sheet of iron, is not converted into steam. This paste, which I have described, serves for all tarts. It may contain any kind of fruit, thin slices of apple, or apple marmalade, plums, cherries, etc. You have only to arrange the fruit and sweeten it properly.

In the country it is necessary to know how to make nice little things, not only to pass the time, but because one has not always within reach people who can do them.

When I have an opportunity of sending into the town I do not fail to provide myself well, amongst other things, with ice, which is indispensable for a certain variety of creams and jellies. It is easily carried, rolled up in flannel and put at the bottom of a box containing sawdust; a large block of ice covered like this keeps for a day or two easily.

I will tell you of a number of sweet dishes

that you like very much — confess it — and to make which the help of ice is indispensable in order to obtain, above all, their basis, which is whipped cream. Such are: Iced Bavarois cheese, chocolate or apple mousse, rice à l'Impératrice, Charlotte Russe, Mont-blanc, etc., etc.; with the help of ice, too, you make all kinds of jellies and chaufroix also.

Jellies are made by dissolving half an ounce of fine white gelatine in about half a pint of water, when it is boiled you clarify it by adding the juice of half a lemon and by straining it; six ounces of sugar, which has been boiled in half a pint of water, skimmed and flavoured with maraschino, kirsch, rum, or the juice of raspberries, strawberries, or any other kind of fruit. In this last case you colour it with a little carmine. Slightly oil a mould and pour in the liquid, which must be allowed to freeze. In the country you are obliged to make for yourself the whipped cream, which in Paris is prepared so quickly and delivered by the dairyman. I make it in the following way: Into a pan of very fresh cream I put for each pint of fresh cream, that is to say very recently skimmed and placed on the ice, a pinch of powdered gum tragacanth, or of gum arabic. I beat it with a little whisk made for this purpose; as it becomes covered with froth I take

it off with a pierced spoon and place it on a sieve placed on broken ice. I continue in this way until nearly all the cream is finished; this is the real whipped cream, and not that which is sometimes sold for it—a horrible imitation—stuff obtained from whites of eggs beaten up into an unwholesome and sickening mixture, for whites of eggs bought wholesale by the pastry-cooks are far from fresh.

Let us pass on to a chocolate mousse. For eight or ten persons I melt, on a slow fire, four tablets of chocolate, crushed in a cup of milk; this forms a very thick paste, which I let cool; then I mix it with two middle-sized basinfuls of whipped cream. The mixture must not be long beaten, as it has in that case a tendency to fall. For apple mousse, you mix the same quantity of cream to a cold purée of about six moderate-sized apples, which apples have been peeled, cored, cut, then cooked, and broken up in sugared water flavoured with vanilla.

These are two little easy dishes which can be made in a very short time. When at Paris a visitor drops in and takes you by surprise, have some chocolate quickly melted and cooled, and your dairy will furnish you with the whipped cream, and thus, in the twinkling of an eye, you have a postscript to your dinner.

Rice à l'Impératrice is composed of some

rice milk very much cooked, very much sugared, flavoured with vanilla, and rather thick. When it is cold, mix it with two large basinfuls of whipped cream and three leaves of gelatine melted in half a glassful of water.

The cream absorbs the excessive sweetness of the rice. You put this mixture into a figured mould, lightly oiled and drained. The mould is plunged into four or five pounds of ice for three or four hours. Before taking it out of the mould —as before taking out of the mould any kind of iced cream—you must dry the exterior of the mould most carefully, as the ice is generally mixed with salt, which makes the cream freeze more quickly. Cooks who neglect this precaution are liable to let salted water fall into the dish, which neglect often causes the best ices to be uneatable.

To turn out a cream, whether iced or not, you must cover the mould underneath with a plate, and turn it over quickly. If the ice will not come out, wrap the mould with a cloth wetted with ordinary water. The difference of temperature is enough ; boiling water would not be more efficacious, and would melt the outside of the ice. In case of need, a long knife can be passed between the sides of the mould and the ice, unless this latter is enveloped with a protecting paper, which can be pulled out simply to unmould it.

But, to return to this rice à l'Impératrice ;

to finish it, it must be surrounded by a syrup of sugar and water, in which is mixed some red currant jelly, or, better still, some apricot jam. When this is cold, you add about half a glass of rum, or of kirsch, to the syrup of apricots. Liqueurs are never allowed to cook, they would evaporate in contact with the fire, and so lose their aroma.

If you wish to have an iced Bavarois, you make first a vanilla cream or custard, the formula for which I have given you in the third letter. When the custard is cold, and you have added your leaves of gelatine, dissolved beforehand in a quarter of a glass of water, you add two and a half basinfuls of whipped cream. Pour this mixture into an oiled mould, and let the Bavarois freeze for four or five hours. Great precaution must be used in getting this cream out of its mould, as it is particularly light and fragile. Exactly the same composition is called Charlotte Russe when you pour it out before freezing it in a deep mould garnished all round with sponge finger biscuits; au café, or chocolate, like those of vanilla, are derived from the foregoing. I have already explained them to you. Whipped cream is again indispensable for the Mont-blanc. This is a purée of chestnuts sweetened, flavoured with vanilla when cold, covered with a layer of whipped cream powdered over with a little

crystallised sugar. Peel the chestnuts when they are raw, then cook them in water, and take off the skins; then put them on the fire again with some milk, sugar, and vanilla; crush them by passing them through a coarse sieve. This purée should be thick—not a liquid—so as well to keep up the whipped cream.

Mery has said, "Why does not the Academy of Sciences offer a prize for the invention of a good dish?" It is a want to be supplied; and I do not despair of obtaining the prize by presenting a novel application of whipped cream mixed with foie gras, served in aspic, that is to say in jelly.

Sardanapalus himself, infinitely more magnificent than the Academy, gave a thousand golden pieces to the inventor of a new dish; and Heliogabalus, the terrible Roman emperor, at least understood so well the slightest thing connected with the table that he was not afraid to spend fifty thousand francs on a feast. It is true that the tongues of peacocks and nightingales, which were the glory of his repasts, must have cost enormous sums. I doubt, however, after reading the account of the dainty dishes of antiquity, if they would please us in these days. In no case should we give eight hundred pounds per annum, as Lucullus did, to him who was designated as butler, or officer of the table.

The aspic of foie gras, with whipped cream, is a refined invention which is quite new. You break off with a fork some little irregular pieces of cooked truffled foie gras, and mix it with some whipped cream. It is formed into little heaps, and enclosed in aspic.

Ice is indispensable for making aspics or chaufroix (Chaufroix, by the way, was a cook, hence the name).

Place an oiled mould on this ice, and pour into it a little jelly that has been melted by slightly warming it. When it has become frozen, place on it some little blocks of this prepared foie gras, which alternate with layers of jelly, until the mould is full.

Lobster, poultry, tongue, boned larks, and the liver of fowls, decorated with slices of egg, truffles or pistachio nuts, kidneys or cockscombs, are also put into chaufroix; shelled crayfish decorate fish aspics. These can be unmoulded a little before dinner, if they are put in a cool place. If the jelly is stiff enough it will not break.

You must inquire if they wish it to be transparent or brown. In the first case, you do not brown the vegetables, nor colour it with meat jelly, and you clarify the gravy.

To make the jelly, first of all you brown in a large stewpan some bacon and some vegetables from the pot-au-feu, browned or not, as the case

may be, as explained above. You allow the meat you add to it to warm through for a quarter of an hour, then you cover it with water, and leave it to cook for four or five hours, with plenty of seasoning.

To obtain two and a half quarts to three quarts of meat jelly, you boil down a pound and a half of knuckle of veal, a calf's foot divided into four, and a pound and a half of shin of beef, any remains or pieces of ham, and some giblets of fowl, four quarts of water, some pepper and spices. After four or five hours of slow cooking, uncover the stewpan, so as to make one-third of the liquid evaporate, take out the meat, and when the gravy boils, throw into it the whites of three eggs, beaten up, which you let cook in it for some minutes in order to clarify it.

Then turn over a four-legged wooden stool, place a porcelain bowl on it, tie a clean napkin to the four legs of the stool, which thus forms a sieve of linen, into which pour the jelly in the evening; left alone, it filters through during the night. By the next day, the jelly is set; if it is not, you put a little melted lukewarm gelatine to it. Then it is easy to cut the jelly up into little bands, or to chop it up so as to make a brilliant border for a cold dish, or it may be used to dip a tongue into, and to give it a beautiful glaze; in fine, it is the basis of aspics, and of all good cooking.

If the jelly is only meant to improve the sauces, it is, as I have already said, useless to clarify it; on the contrary, it should be browned with a little ball of burnt onion; besides which, the browned vegetables already colour it.

Jelly is very easily digested. When it has been made of fowl, which replaces some of the above-mentioned ingredients (the half for instance), it makes a very light diet for a sick person. A child who is dieted, who is offered some of this jelly with an échaudé, is delighted with the large piece given him, which only has the appearance of food and cannot fatigue his digestion. Since I have spoken of the échaudé, perhaps it will interest you to know that the invention is due to Favart, who was a pastry-cook to start with, like his father, and who is considered the originator of the Opéra Comique. The confectioner's shop to which he has given his name still exists near the place where stood the theatre recently burned down, and is still called "Pâtisserie Favart," although his successors ignore the origin of this name.

To return to the diet of invalids, I can tell you that numbers of great doctors have been noted gastronomers also. The doctors Barthez, Corvisart, and Broussais, were not only fond of good things themselves, but had found out the necessity of their existence also for their patients.

"Observe this convalescent," they would say. "You offer him a bouillon, a simple aliment, and he will not hear of it. Give him some well-prepared dish, his eye lights up, his stomach wakes up, his smile returns, he sleeps, and his recovery commences."

Follow the counsels of these excellent doctors, or what is still better, try, by following good hygienic principles, to do without doctors altogether, like your old friend, who is in very good health at this moment, and who shakes your hand.

SEVENTH LETTER.

THE BREAKFAST.

The breakfast (*i.e.* luncheon) and dinner—Care to be given to the table—The silver and crockery ware—Eggs—Signs of their freshness—Manner of doing eggs sur le plat nicely—Eggs brouillés—Poached—A l'Impératrice—Tomato—With onions—Boiled hard—In salad—A la Béchamel—A la tripe—Stuffed—In black butter—Omelets—With bacon, sorrel, etc.—With sugar—Rum—With jam—Soufflée—Choice of meat—Grills—Beef-steaks—Veal cutlets—Pork chops—Veal cutlets en papillotes—Haricot mutton—Navarin—Liver—Kidneys—Mayonnaise of chicken—Black pudding—Sausages—Pigs' trotters—Cold meat—Ham—Galantine—Italian sausage—Minced pork—Calf's head—A word on the art of using up what is left.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

In France, we call by the name of breakfast the repast we partake of at eleven or twelve. It differs essentially from dinner.

The evening at dinner, after the daily task is accomplished, the philosopher, when he sits down to the table, should abandon his cares,

leaving till the morrow the repair of any faults, if he has committed any, taking in the evening of to-day the relaxation which is indispensable after the daily toil.

Lamps, and candles, ordinarily shed their light on dinner. The ideas of the evening are like the lights under which they are framed, somewhat vague and indefinite, even as colours seen by artificial light have no longer the same tints as when seen by the natural light of day; thus, in the evening, thoughts are clothed in colours which are not always exact, and which draw us into the domain of illusions. Our ancestors put supper as the time to give themselves up to idleness, at least relative to that of the day.

Dinner is prolonged in the drawing-room by coffee, that stimulant which once again reanimates the spirits. It is the hour of conversation, of the flight of thought and fancy.

Conversation, which has all the evening to develop itself in, depends not only on the brilliancy of the conversationalists or congeniality of spirits, but on the surroundings of the drawing-room. Even a confidential conversation would be uneasy and formal, if the furniture were to be arranged in line too symmetrically, and if the seats did not a little invite one, as it were, to luxurious repose; in fact, if the eye and the hand are not pleased by harmonious contacts. Let us avoid the contagion of those too

solemn drawing-rooms where one is bored by the stiffness of too much dignity. Laughter and gaiety are the complement and the crown of good meals.

Quite another thing are the brief moments devoted to luncheon; this time is given to projects, to long anticipations, to conversations, serious and solid, from which even the pleasures of a good table should not altogether draw away the guests; but at this moment the mind is less excited, less brilliant, one has more sang-froid and judgment. To maintain this equilibrium, moderation in this repast should be particularly observed, especially by those who, during the course of the day, have to exercise their intellect.

Strangers are less likely to drop in at luncheon. This repast is homely. The young couple are alone; the wife appears in a morning toilette, neat but not studied, possibly still in her morning slippers and floating dressing-gown, with her head dressed a little loosely, which, to become correct, awaits a last touch.

Later on the young children make their first appearance (at this meal) on the high chair between the father and mother.

Parents find themselves again by themselves, when the children are at college. They talk of their future, they arrange their afternoons, briefly and seriously. They have not much time at their disposal; the husband's work has kept him

until the last moment, he must return to it without delay.

Therefore it is a mistake to give at luncheon as many dishes, and of the same kind, as are served at dinner.

In certain far-off provinces they still dine in the middle of the day, but this is a rare exception to the rule, and has only an excuse amongst those who are engaged in hard manual labour; such as these require to make a provision for their forces so as to be able to use them; but those who are engaged in intellectual work should, as I have already pointed out, lunch lightly, with hors-d'œuvres, eggs, grilled meats, such as cutlets or beef-steaks, or fish, cold meat, a little charcuterie, simple vegetables, salad, some cheese and fruit, or dessert. These are the right sort of things for lunch; whereas soup, hot roast meat, and ragouts, are reserved for dinner.

I counsel you to simplify luncheon as much as possible. In a small household with two servants, in the morning the cook has too much to do to give her time and attention to a complicated luncheon. The duties that devolve upon her, such as the preparation of the first breakfast, attending to the brushing of the master's clothes, having to do the hall and dining-room, etc., washing and seeing to the crockery ware

of the morning's use, and buying daily provisions at the market, all these occupations generally prevent her from beginning to prepare her luncheon until about half-past ten or eleven o'clock, and it is therefore necessary to order dishes which can be easily and quickly made, and eggs, fried dishes, or grilled ones, answer to this programme. I rarely meet with really good eggs in the houses where they do me the honour to invite me to luncheon, an honour which, by the way, I in no wise appreciate, as it obliges me to leave my house too early for comfort, and makes me, too, feel clearly the trouble that the mistress of the house and her servants have put themselves to on my account to be so early under arms.

Alphonse Karr went so far as to say that the hearing of a fine piece of pianoforte music was spoilt to him by having wafted before his imagination, even as a far-off echo, the refrain of the preliminary exercises and scales which had been necessary in order to bring it to its final perfection. Well, in the same way, feeling how the household has had to be roused up, and what it has been through that morning, with a painful memory of the violence I have myself had to exercise over my own feelings, so as to get out of my morning wrapper before midday, makes lunching out insupportable to me.

This repast, if it is one of ceremony, weighs on one the whole of the afternoon, cutting it up and spoiling it, for after the meal what has one to do? To separate; no ease or intimate conversation at the fireside, as in the evening. Therefore, as far as I am concerned, let the institution of lunch-giving be banished.

In my own house this luncheon is always exceedingly simple, and eggs frequently appear on the table. Their freshness, be it understood, should be irreproachable. This is the business of those who supply them, though the manner of cooking is often imperfect.

I will begin with plainly boiled eggs. I only like to eat them from Easter to All Saints, which is the period of their great perfection.

Eggs preserved outside of this period can be done as one wishes, except plain boiled. To eat them thus, they must not be more than forty-eight hours old; it is easy to tell which are the fresh ones, but only after they are cooked. When the water is boiling fast the eggs are plunged in, with care, so as not to crack them. They are then allowed to boil for three minutes and a half, with the watch in hand. They are put into a napkin specially folded, so as to cover them up. They must be eaten at once. If on breaking the shell it is

filled with a sort of milk, it is less than two days old. If, on the other hand, the white is thready and slimy, the egg is stale, and no longer agreeable either to the eye or the palate of the connoisseur. When one can no longer get eggs as fresh as one would wish, they must be cooked twenty seconds more, so that the albumen coagulates more and looks better.

By opening the egg at its big end, one can the more easily introduce a buttered sippet of toast, and thus one avoids rendering it disagreeable to the eye. Now, St. Luke has said: "The eye is the light of the body." It is certain that the clean and appetising appearance of food predisposes one in its favour, and doubles its merit. In virtue of this I proscribe at table the presence of bottles of wine undecanted; the meal taken on any but a damask cloth; the serviettes not spotless; the covers without symmetry. I like to see in the middle of my table a low porcelain basket, containing in its depths little green plants or ferns, among which one may place a few cut flowers of the season; I like my little compotiers to hold my fruits and dessert not thrown in pell-mell, or huddled in untidy heaps, but nicely arranged in tidy pyramids; I reserve the moss on which they are placed for great occasions, as, if kept for a long time in the dishes, it communicates a disagreeable taste to the dessert; so,

for daily use, I substitute in the summer green leaves, and in the winter lace papers.

I always use fine linen—mangled. It is quite a mistake to think that it wears out more quickly than when not mangled; on the contrary, it is more glossy, and consequently keeps its freshness longer. Some people use table-linen ornamented with insertion of white guipure over some colour. Also, there is napery with flowers in bright colours on a white ground, which has a lively effect at luncheon.

It is pleasant to see the glass and silver sparkle. Each day it must be well soaped, over and above the rubbing of it with a chamois leather; also, one should put into the boiling water a little soap, or else some soda, before putting in the plates and dishes. My porcelain is washed with a brush, and never with the hand, as the person washing them would not be able to bear the heat of the water required to get rid of the grease; then they rinse the ware in clear water and let it dry on the wooden dripper, which is made for this purpose. It must not, in its wet, dripping state, be dried with a cloth, which by degrees absorbs the greasy water, and stains and marks the plates; also it gets a nasty smell, which it communicates to the china. It is only after the two regulation ablutions in the boiling water, either with soap or soda, and afterwards

in the clear water, and after drying naturally, that the cloth is allowed to remove the last vestige of humidity. This extreme care is very difficult to get from inferior servants. The eggs have inspired me with this long digression, as, when one eats them, the crockery, the silver, and even the glass, get impregnated with a characteristic smell, called by the tasters of wine on the Girond, "fraichin," from "frai" or spawn of fish.

Eggs sur le plat are generally badly done, because they are cooked on a too hot fire, in which case they invariably cook too much underneath and remain unset at the top. They must be broken carefully one by one, close to a saucer, so as to be sure they are quite fresh, before putting them into the fireproof dish of porcelain. The eggs retain their shape if they are good. The dish, already buttered, is placed on hot cinders only, and after having put in the eggs, salt, and pepper, they place them for two or three minutes in the hot four de campagne, or else pass the red-hot shovel over them. Before the white sets on the top there is added one or two teaspoonfuls of cream, or else of gravy, which mixes with the white, giving it a pleasant half consistency. Done in this way, the eggs sur le plat look appetising, and their white is creamy and not underdone.

Madame de Lauzun used to do scrambled eggs

with her own fair hands. She would not trust anybody to scramble them for fear they would be done either too much or too little. They have to be beaten up as for an omelet, well dotted over with little fragments of butter, and seasoned "with good taste." They are scrambled with a fork, turning them all the time on a slow fire; they are kept half liquid, as they cook another minute on the dish. A little gravy, or tomato sauce, little fried croûtons, asparagus points, or truffles, cut up and sauté in butter; mushrooms and grated Gruyère cheese added at the last moment. All these things vary, *ad infinitum*, the dressing of scrambled eggs.

To succeed in poaching eggs one must break them near to a stewpan of boiling water, into which they must be gently slid, so that they do not break, or rather lose their shape. The water is salted and acidulated with vinegar. They must be carefully taken out with a skimmer, while yet in a soft condition, that is to say, when the white is so sufficiently done as to form, as it were, an envelope to the yet liquid yolks. They are placed on a maître d'hôtel dressing, that is to say, fresh butter kneaded with some finely minced parsley, salt, pepper, and lemon-juice. The heat of the eggs is sufficient to dissolve the butter, and thus prepared they are called "à l'Impératrice." They are served alike on tomato sauce, or on a brown

sauce, composed of a roux, moistened with meat jelly in which have been cooked a dozen small onions.

At dinner, poached eggs in a consommé form a delicious soup.

I appreciate a good salad of hard boiled eggs, with a good deal of sweet herbs. Hard boiled eggs in white sauce, or in onion sauce, *i.e.* à la tripe. They should be cut in round slices. When they are cut in half—long ways—the yellow is taken out, and kneaded with bread-crumbs soaked in milk or in broth, and it is mixed with chopped parsley. This stuffing is fried for a minute in butter, some of the white is scooped out, and they are then filled, reclosing the eggs, and they are browned on a dish covered with a little light-coloured raspings.

Fresh eggs are fried in black butter; for this they warm the butter until it is slightly burnt, then the eggs are broken into the pan; they are sprinkled with the black butter, and stirred all the time of cooking (two or three minutes). When the eggs are served, they are covered with the butter, to which is added a little vinegar and some fried parsley.

An omelet, to be good, should be well beaten, and contain a little milk or water, which makes it light. It must be dotted over with little morsels of butter, and the frying-pan must be well greased.

Jean Jacques Rousseau prided himself on being a past master in the art of making an omelet. He recommended its being done on a clear fire; it must not be left for an instant. Fresh butter is run between its edges and the sides of the pan. When the under side is cooked, and the top still liquid, it is folded over in two, and slipped on a dish, so that it is golden and set on the outside, and slightly liquid in the inside. All the ingredients that serve to season and accompany scrambled eggs can be utilised for the omelet; also it can be flavoured with minced sorrel, with bacon, with fine herbs, Gruyère cheese, potatoes boiled or sautées, cut into rounds or slices. All these accessories are put in when it is half cooked.

The omelet is also a sweet dish, then, only a small pinch of salt is put in, and two or three teaspoonfuls of pounded sugar; and at the moment of serving, it is sprinkled over with white sifted sugar. Before folding the omelet into two, a layer of currant jelly, or apricot jam, can be spread over one side, or rum can be poured over it, which is lighted up at the table, so that it has a very bright appearance. As rum sometimes resists lighting, this is how one helps to fire it. Place a piece of sugar in a teaspoonful of rum, hold a match or two over it, when the liquid will catch fire, and spread itself over the dish.

My cook, instead of making her omelet ac-

cording to the received idea, which consists of beating the eggs altogether, beats up the whites of the eggs separately into a stiff snow, which she incorporates with the yellow, sweetened or not; in this way, the omelet is extremely light and puffed.

When the sweet vanilla omelet is ready to be served, it is sprinkled over with castor sugar, and sometimes passed over the top with a red-hot salamander, which gives it zebra-like lines in caramel.

It is omelet soufflé which has the gift of pleasing children. It is made exactly like the other, except that one throws in it two spoonfuls of grated sugar, flavoured with vanilla added with the yolks of eggs, before mixing them with the whites, which must be whipped to an extremely firm snow. It is all turned into a buttered tart dish, which is put into a hot oven or a four de campagne with plenty of burning embers, but with hardly any fire underneath. The heat makes the omelet rise at the end of a few minutes. When it rises above the dish, with a touch of a spoon pierce its skin (without spoiling its appearance), the egg then comes up still higher; leave it for just another minute in the oven, powder it with sugar, and serve it at once; unless you do so the omelet falls again. Here are the three rules to ensure success: the whites of the eggs beaten very stiff,

proper heat of the oven, and great promptitude in serving.

I have taken great pains with this chapter on eggs, because they form an essential element of the French breakfast.

I come now to grilled dishes. I must point out how important is the choice of the piece of meat. The under fillet is the best for beef steak. Beef, to be good, should be bright, rather deep red, and well veined with white fat. One must expressly forbid the butcher to flatten it with a blow of his knife, as he has an aggravating habit of doing. A good beef steak, to keep its juice, ought always to be about an inch thick, surrounded by fat. When it is thinner, in France they give it the name of "tourne-dos"; it has less juice, and becomes dry easily. When it is still thicker, they call it "Châteaubriand," and for preference it is taken from rump steak. Although this piece of meat is dearer, I consider it less savoury than the under fillet. This is simply an affair of taste, and I humbly ask pardon of the illustrious author of "The Martyrs."

Many people get themselves served with rib steak, that is from the ribs when the bones have been taken out. I have always more confidence in the tenderness of the under fillet when the butcher cuts it thick, and from a fat bullock.

One must beat the piece of meat with a little

wooden mallet to make it tender, or with a pestle, or something that will bruise it and break its fibres, but it must not be flattened. It is a fault which is committed with regard to mutton chops, which are not good unless they are as thick as the beef steak. The butcher should trim off the fat, shape them, and shorten the bone. They may be beaten a little, but their thickness kept, without which, they dry up on the grill; salt and pepper them on the side already grilled, and turn only once. Six or eight minutes on a bright fire is time enough to cook a fine mutton chop, as also a beef steak of the same thickness.

Veal cutlets alone may be flattened. Veal should not be red, its whiteness is an indication of its quality.

Those persons who cook a beef steak or cutlets in a frying-pan are certainly the profane to whom the aphorism of Brillat-Savarin applies:

"The animal feeds, man eats, but it only the man of genius who knows how to eat!"

Food is grilled over a charcoal fire, which must be fanned with the wing of a goose, so as to keep the fire bright and drive away smoke produced by the grease that falls on the charcoal. The grill is now modified by a new system, which keeps up the heat of the fire, and at the same time draws the smoke up the chimney.

Gas grills are excellent, the jets above the meat

cook it admirably, and allow it to retain all its juice. As a precaution, and on account of your inexperience, my friend, I would advise you, so as to assure yourself that the meat is cooked up to the right point, to discreetly cut it with a little pointed knife, and just give a look to the incision.

If the meat is a rose-red in the inside, and the gravy runs, the meat will be properly cooked. If the meat has a blue-violet appearance it is not done, and must be left on the fire. Nothing is more insipid or unappetising than insufficiently cooked meat like this; it ought not to be dried up, but it must be slightly underdone; must have the gravy in it, and yet not be flabby.

Veal cutlets and cutlets of fresh pork become a golden colour, fried in butter or grease, on each side, in a sauté-pan of tinned copper. They should be sprinkled over with a small teaspoonful of flour, which is allowed to brown; they are moistened with a little white wine and stock, and some browned onions are added, with an eschalot, a few herbs, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. After having thus covered them, and allowed them to simmer fifteen to twenty minutes, I recommend you to add a little chopped fine herbs and a few drops of lemon, if the taste of it is approved. The cutlets are then put round a dish, with fried croûtons between each.

They may be lightly bread-crumbed over, but this is not absolutely necessary.

The purists of the table, who do not admit sauces at breakfast, simply have the collops in the frying-pan brought to a golden brown in a little butter, bread-crumbed, and served quite dry, with slices of lemon; however, the eclectics do accept at the morning repast some traditional ragouts, such as haricot of mutton. To do this dish, economical managers take certain cheap parts of the meat, such as the breast, which is too fat; the neck, too full of bones; the shoulder —passable, but a little dry. I always use the top of the leg of mutton, in preference; or else the fillet, with the bone out, and divided into pieces.

The slices of mutton are gently stewed with little onions; a roux mixed with broth is added, parsley, thyme, laurel-leaf, salt, pepper, a pinch of mixed spices, and a discreet use of garlic and eschalots. The stew is allowed to simmer for thirty-five or forty minutes in a closely covered stewpan, then old potatoes of equal size are added, or, in their season, little new potatoes. When these are cooked, the grease is removed, they are passed through a sieve, and served. In summer, new carrots are added, French beans, and peas, and the haricot of mutton takes the more distinguished name of Navarin.

When one covers over a veal cutlet, gently fried to a golden colour, with a stuffing composed of bread-crumbs, sausage-meat, and seasoning, and envelops this cutlet in a pork caul, or in a thick oiled paper, and puts it on the grill over a clear fire, you have simply reproduced the dish invented by Madame de Maintenon, called by her "La Côtelette de veau en papillote." It is served in its paper. A little meat jelly, introduced between the veal cutlet and the stuffing, improves it infinitely.

Here are some specially appropriate dishes for luncheon:

Calf's liver, veal or mutton kidneys, boudins à la poêle, sausages served either with a purée of potatoes or of peas, truffled pigs' feet, which are bought all ready prepared, and which one puts for a few minutes on the grill. Black puddings and sausages have to be pricked over with a pin to prevent their cracking, and simply are warmed up in a frying-pan with a little fat; do not add anything. The sausages are just placed on a purée or on eggs.

Liver, calf's liver, and kidneys are cut into slices and are sauté; the one done like the other, in white wine. First, they go into the frying-pan, are dusted over with flour, and then moistened with a little white wine; chopped fine herbs, a tiny pinch of nutmeg, salt and pepper, and a

soupçon of thyme are added. The pan is covered up, and it is allowed to simmer for twelve minutes, and the dish is then served. If these dishes are allowed to cook longer they become tough.

Calf's liver and kidneys can also be sauté simply in butter, with salt and pepper, and chopped parsley. Rognons à la brochette, or kidneys on a skewer, are cut into round pieces and put on a skewer with, between each slice, a small, round piece of smoked ham. This is put into an oven, and basted with a little piece of bacon fat. A little lemon-juice agreeably heightens the taste of the kidneys. Their great stumbling-block is, first, their liability to harden, which happens if they are cooked too much, and which applies also to liver; secondly, their tendency to retain a disagreeable smell, if the little white filaments that they have inside are not carefully taken away. The calf's kidney is better than that of mutton.

Cold meats, that is, what is left over from the roast of the day before, well cut up and ornamented with parsley, seems to be more esteemed by men generally; ladies appear to prefer a little rearrangement. Therefore I recommend you to put the cold veal into a blanquette. For this a white roux must be made, moistened with water, to which are added plenty of little

onions that are served whole but well cooked. The slices of veal are warmed up for five minutes, and at the moment of serving a piece of butter is put to them. The yolk of an egg is added to the sauce, which is poured over the meat.

To warm up beef or mutton, a sharp sauce is required, that is to say a roux, moistened with broth or aspic, with a few drops of vinegar added. I cut and put into this sauce, at the last instant, some slices of gherkin (they lose their taste if they go on the fire). The absolute rule to observe for roast meats warmed up is that they should not remain on the fire more than three or five minutes, and without being permitted to boil, or otherwise they become quite tough. When boiled beef is warmed up in the sauce before mentioned, with plenty of well-cooked onions, it is called "miroton." I prefer the beef done au gratin: cold boiled beef cut in slices, which are arranged on a dish of tinned copper, which has been buttered and floured beforehand. These slices once warmed through, are moistened with broth and a little white wine (if one happens to have it by one); salt, pepper, nutmeg, and mushrooms are added; it is thickened in the oven, but must not be dried up, and just before serving it is sprinkled over with raspings or bread-crumbs.

Minced beef, mixed with a little sausage-meat and the whole of an egg, together with salt, pepper, and a little onion minced small, makes very good forcemeat balls. They are rolled in flour, fried, and served either as they are or in a brown sauce. The same sort of mince placed in layers alternating with layers of purée of potato, and spread on a buttered plate, is another way of utilising what remains of the beef. Also, again, it can be served in little pieces of pastry, which form excellent cases, and are fried in hot fat.

Here is the recipe for this pastry, which is also very good when filled with gooseberry, currant, strawberry, or apricot jam. Half a pound of flour, mixed with a very little water (the quarter of a glass), a grain of salt; the paste is then rolled out with a rolling-pin, and spread over with two ounces of butter; the paste is folded, sprinkled with flour at the same time; again it is rolled out, and when it is a flat surface, cut into rounds with a glass, which has to be pressed hard on the paste. In these rounds of paste the mince is put, and the edges are stuck down to fasten it in. Once fried, salt or sugar is added to these little puffs, according to what they contain; also when one has not enough pieces of poultry or of fowl presentable in a mayonnaise or with a green salad, or hard boiled eggs, I utilise

them in croquettes, and they make an excellent little dish, which one would not suppose to be made up of scraps.

You cut up the fowl and your mushrooms into little dice, the bones and carcases being put either into water which has been seasoned, or better still into stock. Let this cook for a good hour; reduce this stock, let it get cool, and then mix with it the yolk of an egg and some nutmeg. Put into this the bits of fowl and champignons, and when the liquid has come to the consistence of a thick jelly, a mixture is made of the whole; little balls are formed of this, they are crumbed, moistened with egg, and again the balls are crumbed. Then the croquettes are fried in hot fat, the exterior will be found dry, and the interior juicy.

If to your bills of fare for luncheon you add the dainties from the provision merchant, such as thin slices of York ham, Bologna sausage, truffled galantine, larded veal, boar's head, and the great tribe of pâtés, calf's head boiled in water acidulated and prepared à la vinaigrette, you will not fail to have the elements wherewith to vary your luncheon.

I will speak another time of tea, coffee, and chocolate, which are often taken after luncheon, as my letter is already long.

Adieu.

EIGHTH LETTER.

POULTRY—GAME.

Various anecdotes—The cellar—Fowl and game—How to choose them, cook them, truffle them, and carve them—Turkey—Goose—Chicken — Pigeons — Fowl giblets—Daube — Seasoning —Stuffed fowl and duck —Fried rabbit and chicken — Beef à la mode — Fricandeau —Shoulder of mutton—Stuffed veal—Sweetbreads—Fillet of beef in gravy with truffles, with quenelles, with olives, with mushrooms, with stuffed champignons—Game in its perfection—Partridges—Hares —Rabbits—Partridges with cabbage—Civet—Salmis of game—Venison with poivrade sauce.

Je ne sais rien de détestable
Comme un convive froid, dédaigneux, et hautain,
Qui vient s'asseoir à notre table
Sans goût, sans désir, sans faim ;
Qui voit passer les mets sans qu'à peine il y touche,
Epluche tout morceau, mange du bout des dents,
Et tremble d'approcher son verre de sa bouche.

UN POÈTE GASTRONOME.

YOU ask me, my dear friend, from whence I get my culinary experience, and how it is that, not having, as some pedantic housekeepers on the other side of the Rhine, passed my examination in the kitchen,

I have acquired a knowledge of what Montaigne has called after Rabelais, "the art and science of the palate," and what Alexandre Dumas, senior, named "the gay science."

There are several causes of it. First, I am the daughter of a gourmet of Carême's time, of Brillat-Savarin, of the Marquis of Cussy, and other illustrious gastronomers.

My parents were on friendly terms with the son of Véry, "l'officier de bouche" to Napoleon I., who presided, the sword at his side, on the terrace of the Tuileries, at the dinner of his Imperial master. Now if the Emperor ate little himself, he required a sumptuous table in his own house, as well as in those of the high dignitaries of the Empire.

Talleyrand also prided himself on being "first fork" of the day, and the Arch Chancellor Cambacérès raised the kitchen in France to the highest degree of magnificence.

One of our own most distinguished contemporary writers, Anatole France, said lately that the Muse of the First Empire was a "gastronome," and flourished the turnspit like a new sceptre. At this period, a society of witty men frequented the "Bœuf à la mode," and celebrated Comus. "The Almanach des Gourmands" was much in vogue at the commencement of the century, and Brillat-

Savarin was, in his day, the philosopher of the kitchen, even as Désaugiers was its poet.

Providence alone knows of the long gastronomical conversations with which my ears were cradled in my childhood. The subject was seriously treated, and the precedence of such and such a wine had a way of making my father, the finest wine-taster of the town of Bordeaux, into an enthusiast; and he has bequeathed to me his palate. The daughter-in-law of the celebrated Véry, my godmother, had an undisguised veneration for the affairs of the table, and her head cook, whom she retained for over twenty years, did much for my education.

She had still among her friends some illustrious survivors of this "Société du Caveau," which served as pretext for a meeting to so many distinguished men. It is in the eighteenth century that this assembly knew how to group together conversationalists such as Crillon, Gresset, Helvétius, Rameau.

These unceremonious dinners had realised the ideal of French society. From them came songs, that were repeated the next day; clever sayings, which still live. Whoever was witty, or who could appreciate wit, whoever could enjoy good living endeavoured to get admitted to this tournament of words, which a generous wine, together

with highly-spiced dishes, animated with a piquant brightness.

The great seigneurs themselves wishing to impose their society on the "Caveau," the members gave up meeting, and the society was not reformed until after the Revolution. At these repasts only gaiety which had no suggestion found place. It had to be so, for our contemporaries say it themselves, neither scandal, nor coarseness, nor impiety of any description was allowed. The table thus ordered became really the true cementer of friendship, and at our friend Véry's, authors, artists, dilettanti, and pretty women congregated together, were as a last reflection of the charming conversations of the past century.

At this period shone the table of Doctor Véron; Monselet published his "Almanach des Gourmets," and Alexandre Dumas, senior, his superb "Dictionnaire de Cuisine," where one finds, under the heading of "Gourmandise": "The science of good living includes everything—darling science of all the fine and distinguished men in the universe. Its abuse is gluttony, its diminutive is daintiness, from the ancient word 'friander,' signifying tit-bit or delicacy. Hospitable art! containing every elegance, every courtesy; which presses into its service the ox from the meadow, the lark from the field; ice and fire, pheasant and potato, fruit

and flower, gold and china; the one passion which leaves behind it neither grief nor remorse."

When from one's early youth one has been fed with such quotations, one can, without necessarily pushing to excess the worship which is given to good living, become imbued with its value, and according to one's means and standing in society, protest against the barbarity of those who pretend that one must not live to eat, but only eat to live.

How is it possible not to be desirous to penetrate the easy secrets of this art, which emulates and helps, charms and encourages the science of hospitality? Would Mæcenas have been the friend of Horace in the same degree had the latter not been invited often to partake of his good meals; and would so many clever men be so easily assembled together elsewhere as round a refined and well-ordered table? "It is by dinners that one governs man," has been said by a philosopher of the table.

But this long digression has led me far from my technical matters, and I must come back to them. If you will, to-day we will speak especially of fowl, game, and some stews (daubes).

Let me first of all speak to you of the chicken, which, to my mind, comes before all other winged creatures.

It must be chosen young and tender. One can

judge of it by its appearance. Its skin must be fine, white, not the least blue — such a chicken would be lean ; nor must it be yellowish, or it would be old. If it be fat in the inferior portions, if it be thickset and covered with long hairs, or has large spurs, it is an old fowl or a cock, which is good enough to make bouillon, or to be eaten à la croque au sel. When one presses the fillets of its breast, the fingers must leave their impression ; and when one plucks the little feathers from its wings, they must come out without difficulty.

In all cases it is better, above all if one is not skilled in this matter, to have a trustworthy poulterer, as the best of cooking cannot supply the natural qualities of a fowl. Before putting it down to roast it must be covered with fat from a roast joint ; let it cook gently and be well basted, so that it is lightly browned. See that it is perfectly dry before salting and peppering it inside. If the cook perceives that the gall (the little green pocket placed by the side of the liver) is pierced, she must, to avoid bitterness, wash out perfectly the inside of the fowl. Lightly rub it with a piece of lemon, and dry it well before seasoning it.

Half an hour or three-quarters, with a good fire, is enough to cook an ordinary fowl. The flesh ought not to be red, nor seem as if it were detached from the bones.

The duck must always be washed ; he is rarely

exempt from a certain little disagreeable flavour, and requires to be cooked for a considerably less time than the chicken. Its flesh comes under the category of black meats, and therefore should be eaten slightly underdone. Twenty-five minutes' cooking is generally sufficient.

Before putting a goose on the spit, you must, a couple of hours beforehand, fill it with salt, which you take out at the moment of cooking. Without this, it remains insipid. The salt has the disadvantage of reddening the flesh of the goose a little; however, as a compensation, it improves the flavour and makes it more tender. The goose should be young and very fat. It is basted by degrees with a few teaspoonfuls of bouillon. Take away the fat, so as to have gravy, and not melted fat, in the dripping-pan.

When the turkey is not young, fine, and perfectly fattened, it has a fishy sort of taste which is most detestable. It is then only served as a roast. It owes its reputation to Madame Grimod de la Reynière, who was, they say, in the eighteenth century, the first to truffle it.

This is the way I commence to well truffle a fowl: first I soak my truffles for five or ten minutes in cold water, to soften the tenacious earth which surrounds them, and to brush them easily. When the inside of the fowl is carefully cleaned, I simply put, to grease it, half a pound

of what pork-butchers call "white stuffing"; it is a little fat and lean pork pounded, to which I add the peelings of truffles, also pounded up, and some salt and pepper. The truffles must cook for five or six minutes by a slow fire, in fat, then you stuff the fowl with them. You must truffle the breast of the poultry some time in advance, so that it shall produce a good effect. Cook it on the spit or in an oven, without doing it too quickly, and let it cook for the necessary time, according to its size. Some people put little flat pieces of truffles to ornament the breast of the bird. This fashion is a little gone out of date. A good precaution consists in enveloping large fowls in a well-greased white paper, to prevent the fire from scorching them. In order to learn how to truss the fowl, the cook must often watch the poulterer, who for trussing up his wares is without equal. The same observation may be made with regard to fish.

The renowned truffled fowl of Mans, or of La Bresse, is more delicate than the turkey, and the pheasant also is marvellously suited to the precious roots.

It is understood that roast fowls are served without head, neck, claws, or wings. The same thing does not apply to fowls in gravy, on which you leave their neck, wings, and upper parts of their legs. Partridges, woodcock, pea-hens,

pheasants, and all other birds are served whole, and of course drawn beforehand, except the woodcock, the intestines of which are not withdrawn.

The feathers may be left on the head of the partridge by wrapping it up in a strong oiled paper. The pheasant is adorned with its plumage when it is sent to the table; that is to say, when cooked, by the help of little pegs you replace its head and its wings, so that it has the appearance of being still alive.

The goose, modest bird, must content itself with being stuffed with roasted chestnuts, skinned beforehand, and introduced into the body with sausage-meat, salt, and pepper.

I like in a general way a little roasted chicken stuffed with some chopped fowls' livers, mixed together with a little sausage-meat and some bread-crumbs moistened with the yolk of an egg, the whole well seasoned. Chopped livers in a roast duck, too, are good. Never neglect to place some large fried croûtons under the bird.

The broken-up livers of ducks, put to cook at the last moment in the gravy of this roast, which is made more of by adding a little jelly, and slightly thickened, make a delicious sauce called "à la rouennaise."

The name of "daube" is given to a meat cooked in its own gravy in a closely-covered stewpan.

Goose, chicken, duck, and pigeons are all eaten en daube. Giblets of fowl also.

For this preparation you first brown the fowl with some bacon; dredge it over with a spoonful of flour; add to this roux some fried onions, a bunch of herbs, two spoonfuls of brandy, some salt and pepper, and moisten it with stock, so that the bird is half-covered. Then it must be left to simmer for a long time; three-quarters of an hour for pigeons, from one hour and a quarter to two hours for a duck, two or three hours for a fowl, four hours for a goose. The gravy must be constantly skimmed, and the goose basted from time to time.

You can add to the duck, when it is half-cooked, some green peas, or some browned turnips, also half-cooked; or again, ten minutes before dishing up, some olives with their stones taken out, which stones, cooked in the sauce, give it a fine flavour. Before serving it take care to skim the grease off, and add a few spoonfuls of stock to the residue which adheres to the bottom of the stewpan, and use it if the sauce is too thin; if, on the contrary, you have too much, reduce it by uncovering the stewpan. Half a calf's foot much improves a daube.

I will not go into the details of carving or cutting up, which in itself constitutes a small science. I will only tell you, *grosso modo*, that,

for all the fowls before mentioned, you cut off first the leg, then the wing; you divide the members in two equally; you then raise up the little bones which hold the breast, cut them again into two, and do the same to the back by pressing the knife strongly across it. You do the same for pheasants, pea-hens, and partridges, but you leave the members of the partridge whole.

The pigeon is cut into four by carving it neatly from one end to the other, and then across. Birds such as quail and woodcocks, etc., in two only, lengthwise. Small birds are served whole, with their covering of bacon well browned.

Before taking off the members, I advise him who acts as carver to cut slices from the breast of the goose, the turkey, and the duck; these are thin slices, cut lengthwise. In each dish, according to our fathers, there was the slice for the attorney and the slice for the clerk; we will call pieces for the attorney the slices of white meat of the chicken, the turkey, and the pheasant; the thigh of the goose and of the duck.

It is to be remarked in passing, that roast beef, lamb, pork, veal, and hare are cut into very thin slices; slices of mutton are thicker, and cut perpendicularly from the knuckle-bone.

Plates and dishes warmed must be used for hot meats, especially for lamb and mutton, on account of the fat, which sets rapidly.

When delf crockery is used, do not heat it too much, or it contracts a bad taste.

Gravy should not be served under a joint, it softens it and renders the carving difficult. Sauce-boats are used, which are very convenient; they contain on one side the meat gravy and on the other the sauce maigre.

The chicken, to which I return, can be used for all sorts of combinations. Besides roast chicken and chicken en daube, there are chicken au blanc, chicken à l'estragon, and sauté à la chasseur, or à la Portugaise.

These are types of recipes that I am going to explain to you. I do not pretend, in ten letters, to enter into all the combinations which diversify dishes. The bases of culinary combinations are, after all, few in number; but even as with seven notes of music one can write an infinity of tunes, so it is with some fundamental data one produces a considerable quantity of dishes. Thus, when once you know the substance of things, you will easily enter into their modification, and being penetrated with generous principles, you will easily understand the special difficulties which are only known to the initiated.

To do a fowl à l'estragon, you just add four little sprigs of this fragrant herb. The fowl au blanc is commenced in the same manner as the daube, but it is not allowed to colour, and before-

hand it has to be rubbed with lemon-juice, so as to preserve its whiteness. You tightly close the stewpan with a sheet of buttered paper, and when the fowl is cooked you take it off. The sauce is first of all thickened with a piece of butter rolled in a spoonful of fine oatmeal; this sauce is poured through a sieve on to one or two yolks of eggs. The dish is garnished with some thin slices of lemon, the edges of which are scalloped, and you squeeze a few drops into the sauce.

Chicken, like the rabbit à la chasseur, is cut up raw. The pieces are slowly coloured in the frying-pan, or, better still, in an enamelled copper sauté-pan, with some fat and lean bacon. It is dredged with a dessertspoonful of flour; some onions, cut fine and browned beforehand, are also added. Moisten it well with a good glass of white wine and half a glass of stock. It must be well seasoned; add a clove of garlic and an eschalot, a grain of nutmeg, two cloves, and a good bunch of herbs. Cover it up, and let it simmer for from thirty to forty minutes; strain the sauce, and add to it a little finely-chopped parsley. One puts little paper frills round the joints, and before dishing it the edges of the dish are garnished with some triangles of bread fried in butter. Some people like to add champignons, others a bottle of tomato-juice, then you have a chicken à la Portugaise.

I pass to the beef à la mode, to the fricandeau of veal, the stuffed shoulder of mutton, and the fillets in gravy, which are called daubes.

I recommend you to lard the beef à la mode —a fine piece of beef which should be well beaten —not with fat bacon, but with streaked fat and lean from the breast. The difference is great. Once the slice of beef is slightly browned, dredge it with flour, and season it well; add its calf's foot and accompaniment of plenty of browned onions. You can let it simmer gently for four or five hours in a stewpan lined with ham and bacon. The meat must be half-covered with a glass of white wine, together with as much water, and three or four spoonfuls of brandy. Take the grease off before serving; rub down the sauce, and strain it. I exclude from this dish the time-honoured carrots, because I do not like their somewhat sweet taste. I always have a great deal of gravy made, so that the following day it sets in a jelly and garnishes the slices of cold beef à la mode, which makes an excellent dish for lunch. Beef à la mode must be exceedingly well cooked, and should be so tender that it can be almost cut with a spoon.

The shoulder of mutton is boned by the butcher; nearly all the meat is taken off, only about half an inch of flesh remaining. The butcher will chop this very fine; the cook mixes

this mincemeat with some sausage-meat, some soaked bread and egg, salt, pepper, spices, garlic, eschalot, two pinches of saltpetre to give it a beautiful red colour.

The shoulder is sewn up when it is stuffed, and it is cooked in its own gravy. A bone, garnished with a paper frill, is stuck in, as in a leg of mutton.

You can lard the fricandeau, or not, as you like. It must be allowed to brown slowly, but must be coloured sufficiently. Do it the same way as a daube, but moisten it with a very little water—scarcely a glassful for two pounds—as it must not have the stringy look of boiled meats. The outside should remain golden and rather dry. Water or stock is added by degrees. During its cooking, a little good gravy of a dark brown, made succulent with the veal-bones, is added.

Cold veal is only good with its jelly. It has to be prepared expressly, so as to be eaten cold, and, when cooked, is placed in a salad-bowl which is round at the bottom; on the veal you place a plate with a weight on it. The gravy is poured on it, and sets in a jelly; and the following day, by turning over the bowl, you obtain a joint of a fine shape. Do not be afraid of well seasoning the veal.

Sweetbreads are cooked in the same way, only

you must let them soak in fresh water. First take off the hard bits, then lard the sweetbreads with some fine bacon, brown them, and dredge them lightly with a teaspoonful of flour, and cook them with some ham and seasoning for half an hour; add to it some meat glaze, sauce, much reduced, but not too thick, the same as for the fricandeau. Veal sweetbreads are served in their own gravy, to which may be added truffles, or champignons, or stewed green peas, or else surrounded with a purée of sorrel or of endive.

I prefer the fillet of beef, which is destined to be "in gravy," to be cooked either on a spit, or in the oven, to a stewpan. During the last quarter of an hour only, I just give it a short spell in a gravy composed of a little roux, moistened with meat jelly, well seasoned, and to which I add either truffles or quenelles, bought ready-made from the pastry-cook's. They have to be cooked for ten minutes, either with turned olives, or artichoke bottoms, or mushrooms, either plain or stuffed.

When I stuff mushrooms, I take the larger ones off the stalks, peel them, put the washed peelings into my gravy, which is strained; later on, I throw the heads into floured and acidulated water to prevent their blackening, and I stuff them when re-dried with some chopped sausage-

meat, bread-crumbs soaked in gravy, and a little meat, of any description, well seasoned. I put them into the oven, on a buttered plate, for fifteen or twenty minutes, and I garnish my fillet with them when serving. Same recipe can be used for stuffed tomatoes.

I will finish my letter by a recommendation concerning game, and the two principal ways of cooking it.

Game should be high, but only just enough so to be tender, and distinguish it from poultry by a slight smell. As soon as it has gone beyond the desired point, it will no longer suit the palate of a gourmet.

So as to make the difference very marked between feathered game and ordinary poultry, mistaken judges of game sometimes wait until it has arrived at a degree of real decomposition which positively offends the sense of smell. When the vent of a pheasant slightly loses its colour, it is time to pluck and roast it. This rarely happens before four or five days after it has been shot. The same remark equally applies to the woodcock.

In winter a pheasant, to be just up to the mark, requires keeping about ten to fifteen days. Hare is only good after three days, wild duck two or three days, and all so-called poultry require a minimum of twenty-four hours to be

sufficiently hung. Quails should be eaten as fresh as poultry.

One knows that a gray partridge is old when its legs, instead of having fresh yellow scales, have white ones. The red partridge, when he is old, has the second feather of his wing round, instead of its being white and pointed.

I shall astonish you, my young friend, by telling you that the partridge with cabbage is only good on the condition that it is not eaten! Roast partridge must take its place, laid on cabbage which has been blanched for a long time, and in which the old bird will have simmered, his only object being to communicate his flavour, accompanied by some saveloy sausages without garlic, some sausage, and bacon. These cabbages are not chopped up, and have gravy poured over them. Once this old partridge is cooked in this undistinguished society, it must be left in the pantry; it becomes dry and stringy, and has no more flavour than an old boiled chicken. It is, you see, a career sacrificed, even as that of the Iphigenia, or of the pelican.

When one does not roast game, it is made into a civet or into a salmis, which is much the same thing, or nearly so.

I consent with difficulty, as far as I am concerned, to their boiling for me a fine hare for two hours in a civet sauce. I do it myself

differently. First, I lard the back with bacon and pickle it in white wine with some rounds of onion, salt, peppercorns, grated nutmeg, three cloves, thyme, bay-leaves, and some wild thyme and rosemary, when I have any. I keep for the sauce only the worst bits—those from the front of the animal. When the hare's back is roasted and the sauce made by itself, I put into the latter, for five or ten minutes, the cut-up pieces of the hare. How much better it is in this way! It does not lose its gravy on the spit, as in cooking a long time in sauce, and thus does not resemble boiled beef.

Wild rabbit is roasted in the same way.

For the classic civet, you brown the pieces, and make a sauce with red wine as for a matelote, for which I refer you to the third letter. It is distinguished from it only by more spicing, that it is made with a marinade, and that, five minutes before serving, and after the sauce is strained, the crushed liver and the blood of the hare is added. The blood is indispensable; if it is wanting, you must have that of a rabbit.

The salmis is a civet in white wine; it is served with small, well-cooked onions, croûtons, and mushrooms. Some cooks light it up with a little brandy the moment of its being served.

The salmis is useful for game which is rather tough, either from the reason of its being old, or

belonging to a kind of firm-fleshed wood-pigeon, or from the fact of its being a réchauffé.

The woodcock is eaten roasted, should be very gamey, and not drawn; it is, for the game-lover, the bird which excels all others. When served at table the gourmet opens it, covers a slice of toast, prepared beforehand, with its intestines, moistens it with gravy and with a drop of rum and of lemon. This toast is browned by the flame of a candle, or better still, by a spirit-lamp. This toast constitutes one of the most interesting parts of the dish.

I shall have finished the longest of my letters when I have said that venison must be pickled in white wine for three, four, or five days, with a little oil, salt, pepper, and spices, but with vinegar (which would render it acid and common) conspicuous by its absence. A quarter of an hour a pound is allowed for its cooking, and it has some spoonfuls of its brine poured over it, and with the rest a sauce called poivrade is composed, which is analogous to that for the fillet in gravy, except that it is heightened by an almost imperceptible drop of vinegar, a large pinch of freshly-ground pepper, of nutmeg, and of paprica.

This sauce is also served with roast hare, and the addition of a crushed duck's liver renders it delicious.

Good-bye, my dear child.

NINTH LETTER.

VEGETABLES AND SALADS. POTTED MEATS AND PRESERVES.

Haricots, lentils, beans—Manner of preserving the green colour of vegetables—Green peas—Beans—Cauliflower — Salsify — Cardoons — Celery — Mushroom toast — Sauce for Sole à la Normande — Truffles — Salad — Japanese salad—Alexandre Dumas' salad—Terrines of game, of foie gras—Foie gras au naturel—Liver in cases — Fondues with cheese — Same with omelettes soufflées mixture — Charlotte with apples — Whole apples preserved—Ditto in butter — Cooked pears — Cooked fruit—Apricots à la Condé—Preserved chestnuts—Orange salad—Macédoine of fruits.

Les poètes aiment la bonne
Chère et célébrent l'ambroisie.

CARÊME.

MY DEAR CHILD,

According to a treatise of eight hundred pages that I have read for your benefit, and which is only indigestible trash pretending to high culinary physiology, we ought to divide vegetables into four classes: white vegetables (such as cauliflowers, celery, salsify, cardoons); green vegetables (peas,

French beans); dried vegetables (peas, lentils, beans); and indifferent vegetables (carrots, turnips, onions, potatoes). I find this enumeration specially badly chosen, for the last vegetable is for us very far from being indifferent. Besides, the author does not justify his classification; he does not indicate the common traits on which he founds the grouping of his species; and my long lecture only serves to remind me of an item concerning dried vegetables and another for green ones. Here they are. Vegetables dried in the sun, or in the oven, must soak twenty-four hours before cooking in cold water. By penetrating into the dried vegetables, ordinary water replaces that which they have lost, and gives them back their tenderness. They must be put to cook in cold water, and be allowed to boil slowly in plenty of water slightly salted during four or five hours or more. A pinch or two of bicarbonate of soda assists their cooking. Among the haricot beans, the large white bean of Soissons is the best.

Beans must not be quite dry before tossing them up; it is necessary to leave a little of their water, which, joined to butter, chopped parsley, and pepper, forms a little sauce without which beans are dry and choking.

I shall never conform to the old habit of moistening beans beforehand with the gravy of

a leg of mutton with which tradition mixes them; it communicates to them a taste of mutton suet that every one does not appreciate.

Lentils should be large and well sorted, for the grub elects to live among them; also it is disagreeable to find, as it often happens, a pebble between your teeth, instead of a lentil. They are tossed up in a little white roux, in which one or two onions have been chopped, and a little of their cooking water is left to them, like the beans.

The latter, when they are red, suit themselves to a wine of the same colour; in this case they are put, when boiled, in a roux with bacon, moistened with red wine, and seasoned with spices, when they simmer again for twenty minutes.

The beans have their jackets taken off, that is to say they are not only shelled, but the first thick skin which envelops them is also taken off. They are cooked as white beans, but a little chopped sweet herb is added to their sauce.

Water in which lentils and beans have been cooked makes an excellent soup maigre. Some of these vegetables, either whole or crushed, are left in it. You may add also a handful of sorrel that has been cooked in butter, and, instead of thickening, leave a piece of bread to cook in it about the size of one's fist, and pass it through a sieve on serving. The yolk of an egg and a

spoonful of butter give to these soups mellowness and body.

Split peas are also prepared in salted water they are crushed and passed through a coarse colander, then put into the thickening indicated for lentils. These are cooked, accompanied by some good sausages, that are afterwards cut into small slices to ornament the dish, unless grilled croûtons are preferred to them.

Chlorophylle! This is the big scientific word that I have found in this horrid book, the very reading of which has given me a headache. It indicates simply the colouring matter contained in green vegetables, which must be preserved at any cost. To preserve this appetising colour, it is necessary not only to season the water with a little salt and bicarbonate of soda, but to keep it in a rapid state of ebullition, and in a saucepan without a lid, after the first moment.

Green peas are cooked either in English or in French fashion.

The first method consists in plunging them into boiling water slightly salted, to drain them, and put with them on the dish a large piece of uncooked fresh butter, mixed with parsley and a little salt and pepper in the middle of the peas, but at the moment of serving them only.

French beans, after you have carefully taken

away their strings, by breaking them at both ends, are treated in the same way.

Peas, French fashion, are rolled, raw, in very fresh butter; they are placed on a slow fire in a stewpan, with some small fresh onions and two or three lettuce-heads. The stewpan is closely covered with a buttered paper under the lid, and cooked from thirty to forty minutes, according to the quantity. Cooked too long or too quickly, the peas harden. For this same reason, when cooked French fashion, they must not be salted till the last moment, and then but very slightly, after which they are dredged with one or two spoonfuls of castor sugar. They must not be thickened with the yolk of an egg, as some cooks like to do; it makes the dish common. They are served with a little of the water which runs from them, and with the well-cooked lettuces and onions.

Cauliflowers must be carefully inspected for fear of insects; they are then divided into three or four to be cleaned. They are blanched and then placed closely together, to give them the appearance of being whole. They are served accompanied by a good white sauce, or better still, with a Dutch one.

They are more savoury when they are done au gratin and with grated cheese. For this a pretty thick sauce is prepared, which contains

only a little butter. You place alternately on the china fireproof plate, or what is still better, a silver one, a layer of sauce and a layer of cooked cauliflower, dredged with Gruyère and Parmesan cheese, the whole being left in the oven for a quarter of an hour or more to give it a colour. If before dishing one's cauliflower a little meat glaze is put on the bottom of the dish, and surrounds it the moment of serving, the cauliflower will be the better for it.

Salsify is scraped and blanched, and is generally dipped in frying batter, of which I have given you the formula (third letter), before being fried.

I think they are rather insignificant when done like this, and prefer them served as a garnish round a fricandeau of veal, the gravy of which is poured over them and gives them a relish.

Cardoons, parsnips, and sticks of celery, are alike blanched and cooked in a roux with white onions, to which is added bouillon or meat gravy.

These different vegetables are cut in pieces, the parsnips (or turnips) as potatoes, the cardoons and celery in lengths. The parsnips thus prepared can be served broken up in a purée.

When the different vegetables give under the finger they are sufficiently cooked.

The insides of lettuces are salted and peppered, they are tied up so that they do not lose their leaves, and blanched for five minutes; they are then done the same as the preceding vegetables.

I pass over in silence such dishes as carrots, turnips, and onions, because I have entitled these letters "My Cookery," and in my kitchen these vegetables have never been considered worthy the dignity of vegetables properly so called, having only figured as auxiliaries and as seasonings.

Mushrooms and truffles merit more serious mention, they make excellent garnishings; they are used instead of, and in the place of, vegetables.

Mushrooms are put into a timbale Milanaise. For a change you may grill in some butter, slices of bread, with which you garnish the mushrooms either cooked in gravy or white, or with a brown or a white sauce. I have already said how they are done (fourth letter), and how much taste their peel, cooked in the gravy, gives to them. A recommendation that you must give to your cook is to have very little sauce to your mushrooms, and very thick, for they give out a quantity of water.

Truffles may be wedded admirably to a fowl, done with gravy and with white sauce. They are employed successfully in a Dutch sauce,

accompanied with shelled shrimps, mussels, and oysters.

Fillets of sole, blanched, rolled, tied round, and dressed with this sauce, constitute the famous sole Normande, one of the most venerable dowagers of gastronomy.

Truffles are served in a serviette, or in a pyramid. They have to be washed, brushed, and cooked in champagne.

This luxury is perfectly useless. I prefer to drink my champagne, and to cook my truffles in a light white wine, for champagne adds nothing to their quality. What raises them to the rank of Archbishops, or even Cardinal dishes, is to hollow out, and stuff the truffles cooked in wine, with some pâté de foie gras—truffles en surprise, as they are called.

And then, imitating Louis Philippe, who ate four plates of soup, and then a fifth of the four soups mixed together, I would advise you to make a macédoine of nearly all the vegetables I have enumerated (except the salsify and cardoons), to serve them with a mayonnaise, with or without mustard, and in all seasons you will thus have a good fresh salad, appetising and generally much liked. Make it for fifteen to eighteen persons of: One pound of potatoes, one or two carrots (simply to decorate with its lively tint the pale colours of the other vegetables),

the quarter of a cauliflower, half a box of peas, ditto of flageolets, ditto of French beans, and some cooked mushrooms, turned olives, and some raw minced truffles.

Needless to say to you that in summer this salad is made with fresh vegetables. It becomes more elegant when part of the potatoes are replaced by some artichoke bottoms, asparagus points, and thin slices of ham.

Here, again, is an unwritten recipe of a salad much in favour at my home: I choose and cut one or two sticks of celery when raw, into little rounds horizontally, then I recut them lengthwise in very narrow strips, like those for julienne, extremely fine; I do the same with some raw truffles, and thus obtain a very crisp and highly fragrant salad, the taste of which I heighten with a somewhat strong mustard sauce.

A comedy of Dumas, junior, "Francillon," has rendered the Japanese salad famous. The ingenious woman marries in the last act the man to whom she gave the recipe in the first act. What a triumph for gastronomy and for ingenuity! This salad is composed of one-third of mussels cooked in water, of one-third of potatoes cooked in white wine, and one-third of truffles cooked in champagne.

One must believe that the discoveries in the salad field is a tradition in the family of Alexandre

Dumas, for the father has already bequeathed us one. Here it is :

Rounds of beetroot, branches of cut celery, a mincemeat of truffles, rampions, and potatoes. The seasoning, for two guests, is the yolk of a hard-boiled egg, oil in which to mash it up, chervil, gherkins, and whites of eggs chopped, pounded anchovies, tunny crushed ; and at last, to finish, some vinegar, salt, and a pinch of paprica, or Hungarian red pepper.

Lettuce is accompanied by hard eggs, corn salad, rounds of beetroot and of celery, of which also a special salad may be made with mustard.

With respect to this, I will tell you not to be enticed by expensive mustards advertised with great flourish of trumpets. The commonest is the best.

To an endive salad, in the south a "capon" is added, that is to say, a small croûton rubbed with garlic. I do not insist in favour of this provincial fashion.

It is said that a certain Gascon, having promised to a friend a good capon for his dinner, and not having the means of keeping his promise, affirmed that it was a garlic "capon" of which he had meant to speak, and this, it appears, is the Gascon origin of the capon of the salad.

One only adds the ordinary dressing, as a rule, to cos lettuce, endive, nasturtium, dandelions,

and all green salads, that is to say, excluding fine herbs, according to each one's taste, chervil, pimpernel, chopped tarragon, chives, for those who do not fear its persistent taste.

They have invented at your people's house an exceptional condiment, subtle — not to be easily grasped — which for a long time caused me to search, to dream, and for the discovery of which I render homage to the inventors, for it is exquisite! It is a small spoonful of coffee to two of absinthe. You will allow me to divulge this family secret, since I have confided to you all mine.

It was in the country that I made my first steps in manufacturing potted game and foie gras. We were so overpowered with rabbits that I did not know how to disguise them so as to pass them off. Rabbit soup, grilled rabbit (split in two and flattened), fried rabbit, rabbit roasted, all had been exhausted. Then I managed to mask my creatures by mixing them with other meats in jars. There they actually passed as fowl, for the flavour is lost in the midst of slices of smoked Bayonne ham and of well-beaten veal, from bacon, sausage-meat, pistachios, and truffles, which constitute the ordinary foundation of pâtés. First of all you grease the jar with some pounded bacon, on which is deposited successively the boned rabbit and the other things. All these diverse

ingredients must be seasoned separately before being potted; plenty of salt must be used for veal and for rabbit, but none at all for ham; some freshly ground pepper, some peppercorns, nutmeg, and cloves pounded, or, still better, mixed spice; some sprigs of thyme and a taste of crushed bay-leaves; a little of everything must be used, though nothing should be allowed to predominate. Cardoons are planted here and there, and the lid is put on the jar. It is done over with some flour, so as to prevent the steam from escaping; and it is cooked for an hour, or an hour and a half, or even two hours, according to the size of the pâté, in a moderately hot oven.

For the terrines of foie gras, lovers of it should only use very fresh truffles and livers. All minces are strictly forbidden; also you grease the terrine with half a pound of white farce in the guise of melted bacon for two pounds or more of foie gras, soaked for an hour in order to blanch them, and well wiped; a quarter of a pound of truffles, salt, and pepper. Half an hour to three-quarters in a slow oven suffices for the proportions indicated. They can be reduced to a half in weight and time of cooking for the small family pâté.

In order to avoid cooking it too briskly, which blackens and dries the livers, I prefer putting my terrine into the bain-marie, during double the

time, or even triple. In this way, the livers remain pink, and do not run the risk of browning. Pay attention that the boiling water does not enter the terrines, and that when once they are warmed through, they are covered with a saucer, surmounted with a weight, to press the livers down. If they are intended to keep for any length of time, they should be covered up with fresh lard.

Foies gras, with goose grease, or with butter, are very good sautés plain, with nothing but a little salt and pepper.

It is considered an extremely elegant entrée cooked in a Périgueux sauce; that is to say, a gravy, garnished with quenelles and with truffles.

These livers are also prepared in round paper cases, which are buttered beforehand; the liver being cut up into pretty small pieces, and put into them, mixed up with fragments of sweetbread, very little mushrooms, and the cock's kidneys.

It is the fashion to put these paper cases into very pretty little silver stewpans.

These same sort of paper cases sometimes contain cheese fondue, which I make like this: I dilute two spoonfuls of fine flour with one spoonful of dissolved butter, I add a little milk, till it becomes the consistency of gruel,

not too thick, an ounce of Gruyère cheese, and half an ounce of Parmesan.

When this mixture is warmed through, I add to it the yolks of four eggs, and the four whites beaten into a snow; I adorn my buttered cases with it, and they go into the oven for fifteen or twenty minutes.

These cases also may be made to hold some spoonfuls of omelet soufflé mixture, and are risen in the oven. It is a nice sweet side-dish. By scraping into the omelet a little chocolate, chocolate soufflé is obtained. With three eggs, when the whites are well beaten up, ten little cases can be filled.

I have insensibly returned to the sweet dishes. What can I say? It is a weak point, and, although I have given to you so many recipes in my first letters, I will not finish this one without showing you yet a few compotes.

You may be astonished to see me without method, going from a salt dish to a sweet one, come back from a soup to turn to a cream, but my letters are not a methodical treatise, or you would not read them. They have been written day by day, and a bit at a time, as need required, and opportunity presented itself. When I send you my last, I will join to it a little table of subjects, and it will have been more profitable to your general instruction to have

read my letters, one by one, completely through, than to have sought in a manual for one kind of dish alone.

Have I not already taught you how apple marmalade is made—by making them cook to the consistency of a purée in vanilled and sweetened water? Well, by introducing this into a thin timbale crust, it is transformed into apple charlotte. You can replace the timbale by slices of bread, fried in butter, with which you line the mould. When filled with the purée, you turn it over, and immediately you can have another kind of charlotte; hot also. This marmalade is starred over with Malaga raisins, and currants that have been swelled for five minutes, either in hot water, rum, or kirsch.

I make splendid compotes of whole apples with Colville apples. To take out their pips, I pierce their innocent hearts with an apple-scoop. I rub them with lemon-juice to prevent them from blackening; I blanch them in pure water. When they give way if pressed with the finger, I take out carefully and arrange them on my dish; I add some sugar and vanilla to the water, which I boil to the consistency of syrup, and when it is the right thickness I pour it over the apples, and let it grow cold.

One of my relations has taught me a little refinement that I like very much. It is to

put a large macaroon under each, and to blanch some almonds, which, when peeled and cut into strips, serve to stick into the apples, and turn them into small white hedgehogs. A preserved cherry, or one taken from a pot of preserves, crowns each apple. This is a dish for dessert.

Apples in butter are put into the oven on a buttered metal dish; they are dredged with sugar. When nearly cooked, you slip under them some bread fried in butter; but not too soon, for fear that it should soften in the juice of the apples. These are also decorated either with a cherry or a little square piece of angelica.

Pears are cooked like the compote of apple, in syrup. Some people prefer a wine syrup mixed with water, with a little cinnamon.

Pears in butter are prepared in the same way. But in the wine syrup they are served hot, as a household side-dish; a little piece of fresh butter is added, and it is served piping hot with some croûtons fried in butter.

When it is a question of compotes of summer fruits, I simply boil plums, peaches, cherries, or apricots in a sugar syrup. I crack the kernels of the apricots for the sake of their almond flavour, which improves the juice of the fruit. I treat currants just in the same way, for I should not be able to eat them in their natural state on account of their tartness. However, when currants

are fine, and very ripe, I sweeten them without cooking them by dipping them first into the white of egg beaten up, and afterwards in some powdered and crystallised sugar.

Apricots à la Condé are cooked apricots just put in layers alternately with sweetened and vanilled rice milk. This, again, is a side-dish.

There is nothing, even humble chestnuts, which does not make an excellent and little-known compote. When roasted and skinned, I plunge chestnuts into a hot sugar syrup to soften them and to absorb the syrup; when they are nearly cold I pour over them a tumblerful of rum or of kirsch.

Who does not know of the traditional orange salad? When this fruit is not quite ripe it is the best way to eat them. I cut them into little wheels, dredge them with sugar, and soak them in a little anisette, kirsch, or rum an hour before dinner.

That which is called macédoine of fruit, or croûtes au fruits, is made with all sorts of preserved fruits; but when I have none at hand I use a part of some pots of jam, which takes their place, such as cherries, strawberries, apricots, plums, mirabelles, and English pears. These fruits are warmed for a minute in a sugar syrup, and moistened, at the moment of being served, with Madeira, champagne, or rum. At the bottom of the dish you place bread fried in butter, or

else a crown of brioche, heated beforehand in the oven, or, better still, you pour the fruits into a timbale of brioche paste. Some slices of apple, just blanched in water, diminishes the excessive sweetness of the macédoine.

When in a large dinner a hot sweet is served, it does not do away with the queen of cold side-dishes, the ice. Dessert follows with the fresh fruits.

Dessert is that infinite variety of little cakes, of crystallised fruits, and the confectionery for which France in general, and Paris in particular, is specially famed.

A gourmet has said: "This poetry of the table has been raised to high honour by Catherine de Medicis."

It has certainly not declined in the present time. For many years it constituted a perhaps exaggerated expense of contemporary tables, although not very elegant.

Women are unjustly accused of being the only sex which likes sweetmeats. Here is a proof to the contrary:

It is related that Lauriston could not obtain from Louis XVIII. a small preferment for the Marquis of Cussy, who had formerly been Prefect of the Palace of Napoleon I. The King objected that he would not patronise this ex-servant of the Empire.

Then Monsieur de Lauriston had the happy thought to say to His Majesty that the Marquis was the inventor of the mixture of strawberries and cream and champagne. As soon as the King heard it, he wrote with his Royal hand on the application, "Granted." Another triumph to be registered on account of the dear little peccadillo called "gourmandise."

Good-bye, my dear child.

TENTH LETTER.

TABLE IN OLDEN TIMES. TABLE OF THE PRESENT DAY.

Little history of the table—Care to be given to wines—Of wines—Good wine conducts to heaven—Cheese—Plate and silver—Bill of fare for twelve to eighteen guests — Picnic — Supper — Tea — Coffee—Chocolate — Five o'clock tea—The evening tea.

Celui qui reçoit ses amis et ne donne aucun soin personnel au repas qui leur est préparé, n'est pas digne d'avoir des amis.

BRILLAT-SAVARIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

When one sets oneself up against the luxury of to-day, I can assure you that formerly sumptuousness, even though not accompanied with the cleanliness and the comfort such as we understand it of our days, was infinitely greater than now. This was as true of Royal tables as of those of the middle classes; and I have seen in my childhood tables covered with silver hot-water plates, and silver dish-covers, and bouts de table in the form of turrets, very highly ornamented; not to

mention the dishes numerous enough to make the most patient suffer.

After the soups, I have seen, on gala days, eight hors-d'œuvres served at my parents' table, one or two sorts of fish, four entrées placed beforehand on the four hot dishes, covered with their bell-shaped covers, which put these entrées into a state of tepid moisture altogether most disagreeable.

Then the roasts appeared, and salad, to which succeeded sorbets with rum or kirsch, which terminated the first course. Then the four hot dishes containing the relevés or entremets were uncovered. One saw at the ends of the cloth, the dishes which were called les bouts de table, that is to say, cold pieces, generally pies, galantines, dishes of crayfish piled up, etc. Then two different vegetables, one or two kinds of sweet dishes, ice, and dessert, which latter, I expect, was a little less abundant then than at the present time.

Contrary to the ceremonial observed in the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, according to which a dinner lasted three or four hours, comprised fifteen to twenty dishes, the fashion now does not allow even to the largest dinner parties more than an hour and a quarter, or an hour and a half at most. The number of courses has considerably diminished,

and the most hospitable master of a house shivers at the idea of forty-eight entrées, as served at the table of the Prince of Bénévent, and mentioned by Carême.

The examples of the goldsmith's art that used to ornament the table are now replaced by flowers. The silver épergne has been succeeded by a basket of flowers; as many as three are put down a table if it is long. Little china plates mounted in silver-gilt, or crystal stands for sweetmeats and ornamental biscuits, have now replaced the heavy table ornaments in metal, with their several tiers; compotiers in glass or porcelain, flagons with silver tops for the wines, small salt-cellars in silver-gilt or of other material, with flowers, are the present ornaments of the table.

Nicknacks, after having in these days invaded the whole of the house, have even overflowed on to our dining-tables. It is a charming fancifulness and effectually breaking its too solemn symmetry. Old-fashioned pewter and tin work, ancient earthenware and pottery, little dishes in fancy shapes, such as a fish or an ape, hollow, so as to contain hors-d'œuvres, table napkin rings in Japanese or Chinese porcelain, knife-handles in delf, or old Saxe, salt-cellars in ancient silver, drinking glasses in Bohemian glass or in Venetian glass of various colours,

which give to the table something refined and original, which charm the sight, and afford the opportunity of making many compliments to the mistress of the house about her table.

A good dinner nowadays comprises the choice between two kinds of soup (hors-d'œuvres are only served at homely little dinners), one whole fish, with one or two sauces or a timbale, one or two entrées, that is to say, one or two ragouts—or hot roast; rarely, and then only in ceremonious dinners, sorbets, and a salad with the cold roast—pâte, ham, galantine, aspic, tongue, or lobster in mayonnaise (these dishes are taken away immediately the hot roast is served), one vegetable, rarely two, and a hot sweet dish, and one ice.

After the cheese, light fancy cakes are handed round, and crystallised fruits (four or eight dishes, sometimes, in exceptional cases twelve), preserved and fresh fruits. Then, in some houses, they bring coffee to the table, which has had the crumbs removed before dessert — the only time that it is permissible to leave the guests without plates for a few moments—and with the coffee liqueurs are served.

For my personal taste, which I think is a sufficiently general one, I prefer the habit of serving the coffee in a boudoir, or in the snuggery of the master of the house, or in the drawing-room.

Above all, I hold that at least one servant

remains always in the dining-room during the meal, at the disposal of the guests, though it is agreeable for the company, once the waiting is finished, to be left to themselves.

You must impress on those who wait at table to wear light boots which make no noise. Even in an ordinary family, a servant must not wear a blue or working apron in the room of her employers — a white apron is "de rigueur," especially while they are waiting at table. A footman waits without an apron, and with white gloves. It is usual to change the fork which has served for fish, and those who have more than two servants renew the plate after each course.

Would you believe it, dear friend, that the use of a fork is mentioned for the first time in the inventory of Charles VI.'s effects, and, later on, in that of Gabrielle d'Estrées; and only became general in the seventeenth century. The English, however, who make themselves out to be the initiators of all comfort, only adopted their use in the eighteenth century. The glass bottle only replaced the earthenware jar, or the other sort, which was in leather in the fourteenth. Plates were only changed in the eighteenth century, and then only three times during the meal, in the commencement of the nineteenth, as Brillat-Savarin himself remarked:

"It is sufficient to remove the plates after the soup, at the second course, and for dessert." What progress in a little time! How young civilisation is, after all! Clement III., who from the altitude of his pontifical chair, deigned to occupy himself in a special manner with the affairs of the table, did much towards cleanliness in introducing the use of table napkins. It is since the time of his pontificate that we borrow from the Church the cloth and its office—to turn the word from its primitive sense.

The table-cloth was starched and ironed as early as Henry II.'s reign, but only in the houses of the greatest nobles. In these days, the pretty fashion of an insertion of old Guipure on a table-cloth is returning into use; and table-linen is generally damask, with white or coloured flowers.

It is an absurd prejudice to believe that the getting-up and mangling of linen deteriorates it; experience teaches me to the contrary, and it is only in out of the way country places that linen simply ironed is used.

The affairs of the table were so much the business of the clergy, that the Marquis of Cussy has remarked in one of his witty sallies, that the very schism of Luther had its essential cause in the fasts and penances of this sort inflicted by the clergy on the believers in Germany. Therefore spiritual power should not touch diet

too strongly, as in consequence of this fault the strong position of the Church was changed in Europe.

As I have no intention, my dear child, of giving you a complete course of lessons on the history of the table, I say nothing to you about the repasts of olden times, nor the ceremonials of the Dukes of Burgundy adapted by Charles Quint, and then transmitted in all its details to Louis XIV. It would be an interesting narrative, but would draw us too far from our subject. Nor will I enumerate the silver articles of the batterie de cuisine belonging to the Regent. I shall only tell you that they are imitated nowadays, but only on hygienic principles, in thickly silver-plating the insides of the stewpans. They are thus rendered more healthy and more durable than when they are tinned.

Indeed, ironmongers who are not conscientious mix lead with tin, so as to whiten the insides of kitchen utensils, and this salts of lead dissolves little by little. Enamelled or tinned saucepans constitute a danger to health as much or even more than the salts of copper, which is verdigris, the bad taste of which at least makes known its presence, while that of lead, being tasteless, escapes the notice of housekeepers generally. My friend, Doctor Armaingaut, of Bordeaux, has quite decided my opinions on the above subject by

assuring me that the poison of salts of lead is the cause of anæmia, and indeed many other maladies.

And now for a word on wines, although this department is left in general to the master of the house.

First of all, when the wine has travelled in a cask, it must be clarified by well beating it with four or six whites of egg, whisked into a froth, and mixed with a handful of bay-salt and half a glass of water. If the wine is dark in colour, put six whites; if it is light in colour, put only four. You must never, under any pretext, allow the cellarman or the wine-merchant to use any other clarifier, neither for red wine nor for white. At the end of fifteen or twenty days it is put into bottles. You should choose clear weather for this operation. In foggy weather no liquid is clear; the dregs remain in suspension, and you cannot obtain a transparent wine. For any palate, however little delicate it may be, wine has need of a six months' bottling at least. As for myself, I never allow a bottle to be opened that has not been in the cellar for one year. Do not be parsimonious over the corks, and let the bottles be carefully rinsed and drained perfectly dry. This is what is so neglected in Paris. An economy of half-a-farthing on a cork may lose a costly wine, and the water left at the bottom of the bottle weakens

it. So much for the ordinary wine; and I see that it be as well taken care of as possible, so as not to cause me annoyance twice a day.

For fine white wines, I have my bottles rinsed simply with a little ordinary—not old—brandy; and I also have my corks boiled in it, mixing it with water.

It is a gross error to warm wine, it makes it detestable. If it be brought up the evening before, the temperature of the dining-room suffices to take the chill off.

When the wine is uncorked without being shaken, the inside of the neck of the bottle must be wiped, to take away the taste of the cork, before pouring it into glass decanters. It is only very old and exceptionally fine wines which lose anything by being decanted.

With oysters, white wine is served, such as Graves, Barsac, Chablis, etc.; after soup, Marsala, Sherry, Madeira; with fish, white Rhenish wine, or Graves Bordelaise. Bordeaux with the first course and the roast (Château Margaux, Château Lafitte, Léoville, Cantenac, Médoc wine in general, or Saint-Emilion). Mild Sauternes (Château Yquem, Tour Blanche, or Preignac, etc.) with the salad (they are the only wines that bear such a dangerous neighbourhood); Burgundies (Clos Vougeot, Pomard, etc.), and Côtes de Rhône (Hermitage, etc.) with the pâté. Champagne is drunk at dessert. As

for myself, I cannot bear it if it is given with the sweets, and do not then esteem it as much as an ordinary beverage. With the dessert liqueur wines are given: Cyprus, Tokay, Constance.

It is understood that this list is not necessarily given in full at each repast, and that with two or three extra wines enough variety is offered for a dinner of twelve or fourteen persons.

My father, one of the finest wine judges and tasters of the Gironde—I say it with pride—told us an anecdote to prove that good wine leads to heaven; here it is: A confessor severely reprimanded a sinner on his penchant for the bottle.

"Reverend father," answered the sinner, "good wine makes good blood, good blood causes good humour, good humour causes good thoughts, good thoughts produce good works, and good works take a man to heaven; therefore good wine should lead me there."

"So be it," answered the priest, almost stunned by so much unexpected logic and volubility.

Walnuts, nuts, and cheese renew the sensibility of a palate blunted by a large repast, and permit it better to appreciate the various shades of the wines. Cheese must be chosen by a person of experience. You must not disdain learning to do this yourself. Fresh cheeses, such as Brie and Camembert, when they are good and in perfection, are known by their bright, smooth, and creamy

look, and the perfect homogeneousness of their crust; when it is chalky, white, and broken, a common Bondon, well made, is preferable to it. The Camembert and Brie should give under the pressure of the fingers, if it is ripe. The same thing applies to Mont Doré. Brie and Camembert double cream are, according to my ideas, the kings of cheeses. Gervais cheese, fresh à la crème, is eaten the same day it is made. Gruyère and Pâte Grasse of Holland must not be dry. Dutch cheeses, with red rinds, called "tête-de-morts," keep well in the country. Stilton and Roquefort are eaten "high," therefore I banish them from my table. Cantal, Gerardmer, and many others, vary indefinitely the list of cheeses. Brillat-Savarin has said: "A dessert without cheese is a beauty to whom an eye is lacking." I find this aphorism somewhat exaggerated; but cheese is an absolutely necessary addition to a dinner.

I have spoken to you in my letters of breakfast and of dinner. Now for a few words about supper and country picnics, such as we have very often during the summer, sometimes at the house of a keeper of Marly Forest, sometimes at that of Vaucresson, or again at Écouen in the woods, at Poissy on the banks of the Seine, at Sannois on the hillside, at Mandres-les-Valley, or on the shady banks of the Yerres, at the farm of Gif in the neighbourhood of Sceaux—everywhere really where we are

sure of finding a table for our elbows and great trees to shelter our heads, though this does not prevent us from eating on the grass.

In all the above-mentioned places we generally find bread, wine, and eggs for the traditional omelet, and, what is more, tranquillity and very few Sunday excursionists, who overrun the outskirts of Paris.

If I unite these two primitive repasts, with such different characters—for the supper at home supposes an elegant repast, and an open-air picnic is a rustic one—it is that they are composed of nearly the same things—that is to say, of cold dishes.

For twenty-five or thirty guests, I have prepared the evening before three fine roast fowls (if they can only be cooked the last minute, I have them plunged for five minutes into a pail of cold water as they are taken from the spit, they are only the better for it); five or six pounds of fillet of beef, or, better still, a daube of beef à la mode in jelly; one pound and a half of salted Hamburg meat, the same of a York ham cut into thin slices, and two pounds of galantine, also in slices, the whole packed and tied up by the purveyor to prevent its drying. I prepare a macédoine of vegetables in a salad-bowl, and put the mayonnaise into a large-necked, well-corked bottle. Two or three lobsters are sometimes added to the salad;

a dry cheese, and fruits which will bear shaking are packed up, with some bottles of tisane of champagne, a bottle of cognac, and three quarts of coffee. That of the country being often to be avoided, it is better in summer to drink one's own—either iced or heated in the bain-marie—than to accept that of the good villagers.

A block of twelve to sixteen pounds of ice, rolled in flannel, is placed in a case of sawdust, or simply in a basket; in another, the provisions, some table-napkins, and covers of plated ware, and you take this precious luggage either in a brake or by rail.

I remember a certain picnic (we were fifty persons) which the weather spoiled. We had engaged three Italian Court musicians (they were not foreigners !). It stormed and rained violently; our Transteverins also, the one on his harp, another on his violin, and the third on his guitar, so well that the younger members of the picnic party danced until midnight without paying any attention to the weather. Happy power of a picnic!

For supper, and according to the number of guests, one may have the same sort of menu. You may add in the winter, consommé, oysters, cold fish, patties of foie gras, and coffee.

I will also say a word to you on the subject of those little teas given at five o'clock, or during the evening, in a friendly way. For this it is

sufficient to have a light table with two tiers, on which is placed the tray, furnished with its cups, tea-pot, cream-jug, and water-kettle, while one or two dry cakes, slices of brown bread and butter, sandwiches of ham or of foie gras are arranged on the lower shelf.

The water must be as fast boiling to make good tea as to make good coffee. For tea, a teaspoonful of tea for each person; for coffee, a dessertspoonful of ground coffee. If there be many guests, you lessen the number of the spoonfuls. The quantity of cups of boiling water should be measured off in advance, proportionate to the number of guests.

In my house tea is replaced by chocolate, which is in favour there, when it does not follow a large dinner. The chocolate is broken up, but must not be dissolved in water, unless some one has a special taste for it thus, or by an order of the doctor. It must melt, slowly at first, in milk which has been already boiled (for fear the latter should turn). When it is dissolved, it is boiled up quickly, and when it has risen twice in boiling it must be served; for if it remains at the corner of the fire the cocoa-oil forms specks on it, the same as on broth, and it becomes rancid and even sour.

The cook must not leave the chocolate; first of all, because it boils over easily into the fire, and

secondly, to have it light, frothy, and creamy, it must be constantly stirred with a chocolate-whisk, that is rolled briskly between one's hands, the very name of which, "moussoir," indicates its use.

When the tea is ceremonious and the invitations exceed the number of twelve, it is better to have it laid on the dining-room table, the middle of which should be decorated with a basket of flowers, if possible. A tray is put at the place occupied by the mistress of the house, which has on it a kettle containing prepared punch. One mixes with hot water a pitcher of Grassot's punch, or Potin's, which is bought ready made. The tea-pot, the chocolate-pot, and the cream-jug must not be forgotten—and which contains cream, or milk which has not been boiled. The punch glasses, and those for syrups, are placed on two little trays, and if the number of guests does not exceed twenty it is more "homely" that the mistress of the house, and the younger members of it, should themselves wait; but over this number of guests, a servant is necessary.

Dry cakes alone must be served with tea, brioches—that should be warmed in the oven ten minutes before serving—biscuits, Genoese pastry, galettes, babas, and Savarin, with their almond icing, Vienna pastry, and, to crown all, sandwiches of ham and of foie gras.

Little ornamental cakes, or "fours," enliven

the table; the tea serviette is placed between the saucers and the plate.

The kettle sings and steams, cups from China and Japan mingle amid the syrup glasses, which the orgeat whitens, which the cherry syrup reddens, and which the orangeade gilds — which gladden the eye, and flash on to the table-cover coloured motes, at once brilliant and gay. Tea is, indeed, a very charming pleasure of the table.

With this last letter you will find a very simple family menu, that I have composed this summer, for a young housekeeper. It is the menu for a week. I think, my dear young friend, I have enlightened you on the various circumstances which may arise for the table of people of good social position, and of those who know how to eat, without being able to give themselves a Vatel.

To excuse myself for the want of method that I have followed with you in my familiar gastronomic correspondence, I could often say to myself, with the old lady who, however, chatted agreeably, but who, nevertheless, sometimes lost the thread of her discourse, "What was I going to say to you, then?" With a little indulgence you will perceive it, for if my letters, like the old lady's conversation, have neither a great plan nor great order, the parentheses are nevertheless warranted, and I am sure that you will know how to profit by my counsels.

And to finish! Listen to these few kind counsels which have been given to women, and which make me recollect a great lady at the commencement of this century: "My friends, occupy yourselves with your tables, and care personally for their delicacy and brilliancy. Vary the dishes, arrange so that your guests never cease feeling that they are directed by your tact; make both dining-room and drawing-room agreeable to the men. Your gracious and invisible influence will go to the heart of all, and each will feel the rôle that politeness, wit, and variety of conversation can play at table. This agreeable fact will shine before all eyes — that a well-thought-out dinner, served with taste, to a small number of friends, at a round table, on which the good wine flows, and seasoned with lively wit, is the most exquisite feast, and the very triumph of the intellect of Society."

APPENDIX.

BILL OF FARE FOR A FAMILY,

FOR EIGHT DAYS.

Summer Fruits can be replaced in Winter by such fruits as Apples, Pears, Oranges, or by Confitures.
Preserved Vegetables can be used instead of fresh ones.

First Day.

LUNCHEON.

Radishes and Butter.
Grilled Mutton Chops.
Potatoes à la Crème.
Galantine of Fowl. Salad.
Fruits.

DINNER.

Macaroni and Cheese Soup.
Lobster with Mayonnaise Sauce.
A Cold Ham.
Green Peas à l'Anglaise.
Chocolate Cream.
Apricots.

Second Day.

LUNCHEON.

Butter, Norwegian Anchovies.
Eggs, poached à l'Impératrice.
Or, „ with Maître d'Hôtel Sauce.
Or, „ with Tomato Sauce.
Veal Collops stuffed with Mushrooms.
Or, Beef à la mode, cold—in jelly.
Risotto or French Beans.
Cream Cheese. Cherries.

DINNER.

Soup Croûte au Pot.
Boiled Beef with Cucumber Salad.
Roast Duck with Croûtons and Lemon.
Stewed Lettuce. Strawberries.

Third Day.

LUNCHEON.

Butter, and Fillets of Herrings.
Beefsteak with Potatoes Sautés.
Bologna Sausage.
Salad of Beef, or Green Salad.
Fruits.
Or Currant Salad with Kirsch.

DINNER.

Saint Germain Soup.
Fried Soles à la Colbert.
Roast Leg of Mutton.
Salad of Dressed Vegetables.
Coffee Cream.
Cassis.

Fourth Day.

LUNCHEON.

Butter and Pickled Oysters.
Veal Cutlets en Papillotes.
Cold Mutton with Remoulade Sauce.
Preserved Cherries on Macaroons.

DINNER.

Milk Soup, cold, à la Brioche.
Thin slices of Grilled Salmon à la Maître d'Hôtel.
Roast Chicken.
Hamburg Smoked Beef.
Mushrooms.
Green Salad.
Apricot Tart with Cream.
Fruits—Gooseberries.

Fifth Day.

LUNCHEON.

Radishes (or Olives). Butter.
Omelette with Champignons.
Or, ,, with Croûtons.
Or, ,, with Asparagus Points.
Beefsteak with Potatoes.
Cold Fowl. Salad.
Rice à la Condé with Apricots.
Fruits—Peaches.

DINNER.

Parmentière Soup (Leeks and Potatoes).
Fish in season, en Matelote, or Boiled, with a Green Sauce of Gherkins finely minced.
Fillet of Pork.
Beans Panachés.
Iced Bavarois.
Fruits—Apricots.

Sixth Day.

LUNCHEON.

Fresh Sardines (grilled).
Calf's Liver sauté Maître d'Hôtel.
Cold Pork. Salad of French Beans.
Apricot Preserve.
Fruits—Cherries.

DINNER.

Sorrel Soup.
Roast Beef. Salad.
Savoury Tongue, cold.
Artichokes with Gravy.
Cabinet Pudding, cold.
Fruits—Fresh Green Almonds.

Seventh Day.

LUNCHEON.

Hors-d'œuvre of Fish.
Scrambled Eggs with Asparagus Points.
Or, „ with Tomatoes or Cheese.
Or, „ with Croûtons.
Kidneys en Brochette with Ham.
Or, Veal Kidneys stewed in White Wine.
Cold Roast Beef.
Cucumber or Tomato Salad.
Raspberries and Strawberries.

DINNER.

Rice and Tomato Soup.
Grilled Tunny, Maître d'Hôtel.
Or, Boiled Mullet with White or Green Sauce.
Timbale Milanaise.
Roast Pigeon, or Duck, or Veal, or Leg of Mutton.
Salade of French Beans.
Iced Rice à l'Impératrice with Apricots.
Peaches.

Eighth Day.

LUNCHEON.

Artichokes Poivrade.
Navarin with Mixed Vegetables.
Veal and Ham Pie.
Salad.
Fruits—Salad of Oranges and Strawberries with Brandy.

DINNER.

Soup of Italian Paste.
Brill with White Sauce, or Crayfish à la Bordelaise.
Chicken Sauté Portugaise.
Remains of the morning's Pie.
Green Peas.
Omelet Soufflée with Rum.
Fruits.

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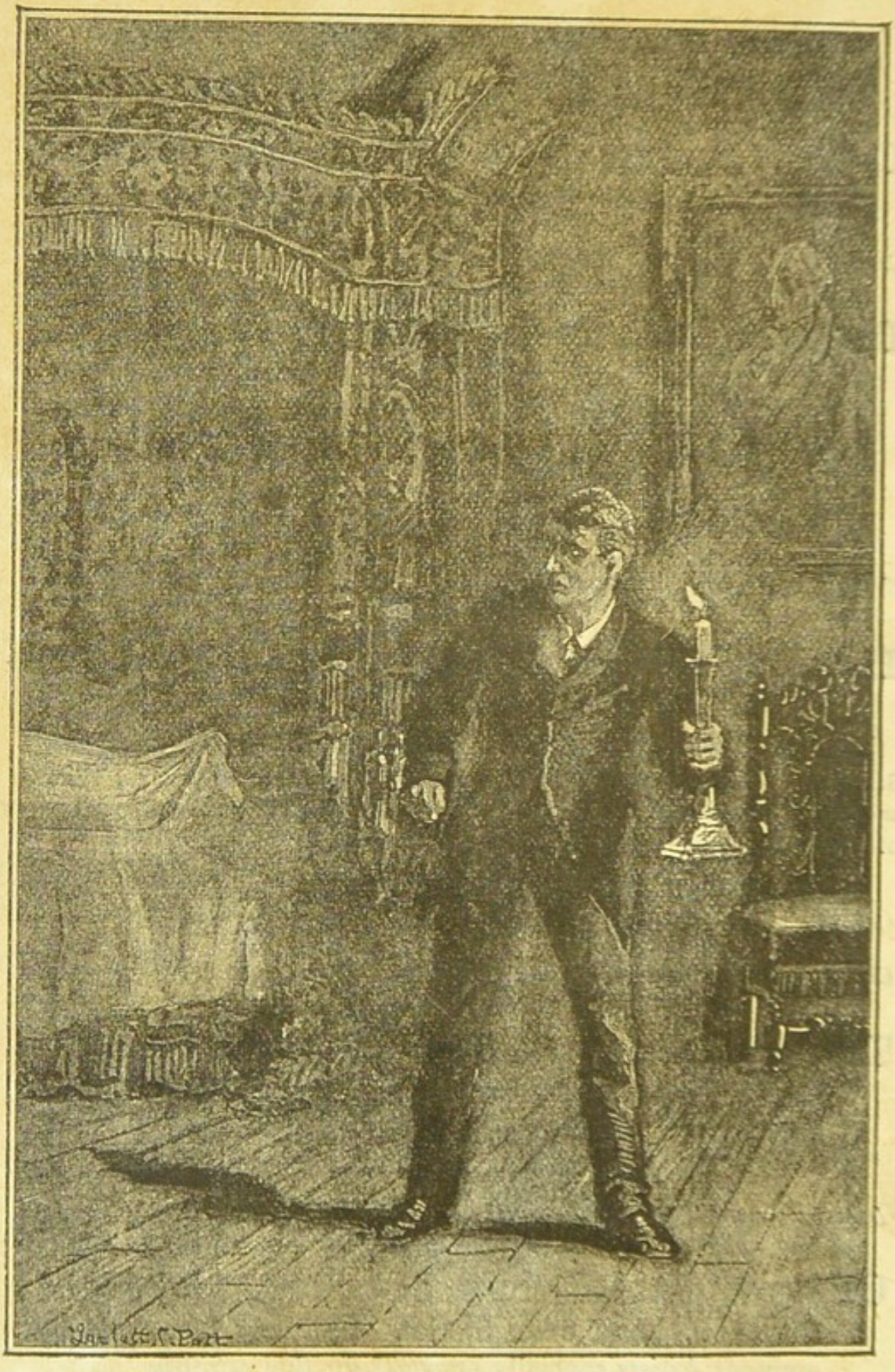

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