

is one of the least offensive features of the convict management of Georgia, and one of the lowest death-rates known to this execrable system in any of the States where it is found. The death-rate in the Mississippi convict camps, 1881-82, was 8 per cent. a year. In Louisiana in 1881 it was 14 per cent. Such are the official figures of a prison system which exists nowhere among civilized people except where two centuries of slave-holding have blunted our sense of the rights of man. To quote once more my own words so carefully left unquoted by Mr. Johnson, "If any one can explain them away, in the name of humanity let us rejoice to see him do so." And let the ex-Senator make room for him, for he has only made the case look worse than it did before.

Only the necessity of maintaining the truth of my pages, brought into question by Mr. Johnston and others, has induced me to lay the present statement before the readers of *THE CENTURY*. I maintain, and have asserted from the first, that much of the injustice and cruelty practiced upon the colored race springs not from malicious intent, but from mistaken ideas at war with the fundamental principles of human right and American government; and the gentleman himself illustrates this by lifting up, after all, the standard of class-rule, race-rule, and status-rule, as against the right to *earn* domination without regard to race, class, or status, by intelligence, morality, and a justice that is no respecter of persons.

G. W. Cable.

The South Kensington School for Cookery.

DESIRING a month's experience at the famous cooking school of South Kensington, I had written the secretary from Germany, asking the conditions of entrance, offering testimonials as to my social standing, and expressing a wish to meet all expenses of correspondence. I was told in reply that I could enter on any Monday upon paying the proper fee, that references as to character were not required, and that I owed the school tuppence-halfpenny for postage. The letter was accompanied by "The Directory of the National Training School for Cookery," which I eagerly studied. I derived from it the information that the school was under the patronage of a long list of names "hedged about" with accompanying titles; that the "training for teachers of cookery" required a course of study extending through five months, the expense being £21 (\$105), exclusive of books, board, etc.; that there were a "high-class cookery kitchen" and a "plain cookery practice kitchen," in each of which a learner might take a two weeks' course, and receive at the close a "certificate" which should state her standing and attainments.

The school occupies one of the buildings erected for the exhibition of 1872, a dismal place situated in the rear of another structure. When first organized, the instruction consisted of lectures on food and the processes involved in its preparation, accompanied by demonstration lessons, at which the pupils simply took notes. Under the intelligent supervision of Sir Henry Cole, practical work was soon introduced, and the whole scope of the enterprise was extended. By the death of this large-minded and benevolent patron, the school lost one of its best and most active friends.

As now carried on, "The National Training School for Cookery" includes five departments — the scullery, the children's room, the demonstration kitchen, the plain cookery practice kitchen, and the high-class cookery practice kitchen. The working force actively engaged comprises the "Lady Superintendent," four teachers, two professional cooks, and several scullery-maids. The superintendent has the immediate charge, financial and executive, of the entire enterprise. She is undoubtedly a woman of ability, and has her work well in hand. The school is altogether a private enterprise, sustained by voluntary subscriptions and pupils' fees. Like all such educational attempts, it is cramped for means, and has not as yet been able to meet its current expenses, and is consequently burdened with a small debt.

The scullery is the primary room in the course, and the pupils practicing therein brighten the coppers and clean the utensils used by the demonstrator in her lessons. They are taught thoroughly and practically, and it is an interesting sight to watch their work. The coppers are made to shine like molten brass, and come from their hands spotless within and without. Scrupulous cleanliness is enforced, and no more valuable lesson can be taught an incipient cook. All the polishing is done with the bare hand, using soap, sand, and a little acid, lemon-juice being preferred.

Next the scullery is the children's kitchen, and a pretty thing it is to see the little maidens cooking there, each with a whimsical look of grave responsibility shadowing her small face and intently absorbed in her particular work. The morning I visited this room a class of twelve young girls — all, I should judge, under fourteen years of age — were busy under the instruction of a professional cook. They came from one of the numerous charity schools of London, and were sent at the expense of the "Worshipful Company of Cooks," one of the old guilds, a wealthy and influential organization. The children were all in uniform — a blue-flannel dress, large white apron, and a quaint little cap, such as London under-housemaids wear, perched on their heads. This weekly lesson in cooking must be of great value to them. The cook who had them in charge is an expert, and has long been employed in the school. She had one maid to assist her, and the two kept the twelve pupils busy each at a separate task. Every child was numbered, and there hung by the cook's table a programme of the day's work indicating what each pupil was to do.

In the demonstration kitchen lessons are given in plain cooking from ten to twelve in the morning, and in the nicer operations of the culinary art from two to four in the afternoon. This kitchen is well furnished with ranges, gas stoves, and all needed utensils. The cook stands behind a long counter, in front of which are arranged benches rising one above the other, so that all can see perfectly. The class is always large; the cook in charge is quick, skillful, accurate, and fully competent for her work. Men as well as women study in this room, — two, who were preparing to be professional cooks, attending regularly the four weeks that I was in the school.

The practice kitchens are on the other side of the building, separated from the demonstration room by the secretary's office. The class which I entered numbered eight. One of the staff teachers, a graduate

of the school, superintended the instruction in this room, assisted by one and sometimes by two of the normal pupils. The lessons learned here in regard to saving and utilizing every scrap of everything are well worth the fee given for the course. The best and most practical work of the school is done in this kitchen. The same theory is taught in the plain cookery demonstration lessons; but here practice is joined to theory, and the value of both is increased by the union.

Opening out of this room is an apartment in which dinner is served every day at one o'clock to any customers who may desire it. Here, too, in the afternoon are displayed in tempting array, and offered for sale, the results of the day's work in the various departments. Many purchasers come daily at four o'clock in the afternoon to select cakes, jellies, pastry, entrées, or whatever may be for sale.

I learned from the secretary that the students, except in the demonstration classes, were mostly servants learning to be cooks, or young women from the lower middle class who expected to practice in their own homes. The normal pupils seemed intelligent and earnest, and it is required that they have sufficient education to be able at least to speak and write correctly. Ladies of position do sometimes attend the demonstrations and take notes, but it is the exception rather than the rule. The poor, who most need such instruction, have not yet been benefited by the school to any appreciable extent, since the expense involved is too great for their means.

The plain cooking taught is essentially English, and has both its excellences and its defects. The English seem to love meat puddings, pork pies, and heavy, rich stews, all of which are to my mind neither wholesome nor palatable. To make a beefsteak into a pudding with a suet crust and then boil the mixture is quite as grave an error as the Yankee "fry." The crust for pork pie is made by boiling lard and flour and water together, and then this heathenish compound is formed into proper shape, filled with scraps of pork, and baked. If the crust is not intended to be eaten, it is certainly not an economical way of cooking pork; if designed for food, what stomach could digest it? Let no one imagine that more pork is consumed in America than on the other side of the Atlantic. That the South Kensington school teaches such a variety of ways in which it can be prepared is an indication of the rank it holds as an article of diet.

Boiled puddings also prevail over any other kind. Many are excellent, and can be recommended for the same reason that Dickens recommended crumpets,—they are both "cheap and filling." The number of delicate puddings, attractive both to the eye and the palate, is very small. On the other hand, the English buns, scones, galettes or tea-cakes, and a great variety of plain cakes for the most part raised with yeast, are far more digestible and satisfactory than the rich cakes we so delight in. When the English child wants a "piece," or the English "grown-up" takes a lunch, either calls for a "bun," which is simply a delicate sort of bread with sugar and currants or raisins added. A bun and a cup of tea are much indulged in by the

English woman, and both are invariably good. Another improvement on American cooking is the superiority of the fruit tart over our pie. It is made in a deep dish, which is filled with the fruit and covered with a light, tender crust. The soggy under-crust is thus wholly avoided; the filling composes the larger part of the tart, and the pastry is not in the least greasy or hard to digest.

In the high-class kitchen the French methods prevail, as they do in all places wherein elaborate and elegant cooking is successfully attempted. One reason for their superiority is the minute attention to details they exact. Every step must be perfect, and, as a consequence, the result is also perfect. In this kitchen, not only the richer boiled puddings, including of course the English plum pudding, are prepared, but delicate soufflés, delicious creams, and jellies of all sorts are made and offered for sale at the close of the day's work.

While the dishes prepared are almost invariably good, the instruction is certainly open to criticism. In the first place, the teaching force is too small, and pupils are obliged to waste considerable time waiting for attention. There is, moreover, no systematic way of giving recipes. One must pick up the items piecemeal and patch them together as best she can. The school publishes a book, "Lessons in Cookery," but it is full of inaccuracies and has been since revised. A student purchasing this manual does not know, of course, which recipes are correct and which are not, and is sure to come to grief if she undertakes to follow them without supervision. The following instance will illustrate this point. One of the pupil-teachers, working near me, was making an Irish stew exactly according to the instructions in her book. The superintendent, happening to pass the table, asked what she was doing. She answered respectfully that she was making an Irish stew, whereupon the teacher said severely, "I wish you would do it right," and then proceeded to give directions which were totally at variance with those in the book. The girl meekly did as she was bid, but after the superintendent had gone she said in a grieved tone, "I wish they would correct the book or not allow us to use it." The preface to the English edition says that "the loose expressions, such as 'a pinch,' 'a little,' found in all cookery books, are therefore avoided, and precise quantities are given." This principle is constantly violated in the school. Scarcely a lesson passed during which I was not told that certain ingredients could not be exactly stated, that I must use my judgment as to amounts, and that certainty could only come with practice.

The school aims to give simply manual practice. There are no courses of scientific lectures, no instruction as to combinations of food, dietaries, comparative values, or anything of the sort. I was told that such instruction had been attempted, but the attainments of the scholars were not as a rule sufficient to make it profitable. It is undoubtedly an excellent place to be trained for a cook, but cannot be recommended to those who wish to study the philosophy underlying processes as well as the processes themselves.

Mary B. Welch.