

## HOW TO GIVE A NICE LITTLE SUPPER.



THERE are, perhaps, few opportunities for exercising taste better than a cold supper, for every dish is placed on table at once. It would, however, be impossible to enter into

the detail of the arrangements of the table, without knowing with tolerable accuracy the resources of the establishment. For instance, where there are plenty of silver dishes, as well as cut-glass ones, to arrange a table handsomely would be far easier than where there are neither.

I would, however, give a few general directions. Have some flowers—real ones, if possible—and also mix plenty of green leaves with them. Try and alternate the dishes in colour. For instance, do not place a white mould of blanc-mange next to a dish of custard or a mayonnaise salad. Again, do not overcrowd the table.

We will go through a variety of dishes suitable for supper, explaining where necessary how they should be made, and also giving hints as to how they may be improved in appearance.

First, a very good dish is a cold roast turkey, glazed. What a difference, however, in appearance between one that has been glazed and one that has not!

I will not enter here into an elaborate description of the proper method of making glaze beyond describing it as good rich stock, boiled down till it has the appearance of strong liquid glue. In making glaze, great care should be taken so as not to allow it to remain too long on the fire. As soon as the stock begins to turn colour, remove the stock-pot from the fire, and quickly slacken the heat, otherwise the contents will get burnt, and much of the flavour destroyed, especially if the glaze be intended for the purpose of making either soup or gravy. The simplest method of obtaining glaze is to buy it ready-made—it is sold in skins—only take care to get it at a thoroughly respectable shop.

Now, to glaze a turkey is so very similar to varnishing one, that perhaps the easiest method of describing the operation is to say: Melt some of the glaze in a little basin, and add, if you like, a very little water to it. Then take a fairly stiff brush and paint the turkey all over, drumsticks and all, making the breast par-

ticularly shiny. You will now see how very much the turkey has improved in appearance. It has, in fact, a rich mahogany look. If you are glazing, say, a couple of fowls, the principle is just the same. You will see the difference directly. By doing one first, and then comparing the two, you will understand the meaning of the simile I have given in reference to the mahogany.

Next, take some nice, fresh, bright green, double parsley, and fit some into all the hollow places you may observe about the turkey, of course trying as much as possible to make each side look alike. Place the turkey on a good-sized clean dish, and garnish it with some more parsley and cut lemon. I will try and describe, as some may not know how, the best method of cutting lemon for garnish. Cut a lemon in half the ordinary way, and then with a sharp knife cut off a thin slice, which is of course a complete circle, the centre being white, and the circumference a thin rim of yellow peel. Cut this in half again, thereby leaving you two semicircles. Next cut the semicircular rim—only the rim, or peel, or circumference, whichever you like to call it—through with a knife, and pull the two quarters of circles open with your fingers, till they stand exactly opposite each other. The hard white part of the lemon in the middle is quite sufficient to keep them together, if no violence is used. When I say pull them open, I mean only so far as, were another piece exactly like it placed over it crossways, they would again form a round slice of lemon.

Now a lemon cut up in this way makes a very pretty garnish for various dishes, besides cold game and poultry—as, for instance, a boiled fish, such as a turbot, on which has been sprinkled some lobster-coral, surrounded with lemon cut in this manner, alternately with a little parsley and a few little crayfish, looks far different to what it would plain.

Just so with our turkey. There is one more thing to set it off, and that is, if possible, get a fine, small, white camellia, just tinged here and there with pink. Now, as camellias are not easily obtainable, and even if there be a few in the greenhouse, they would probably be coveted on such occasions as that we are speaking about, for the purpose of adorning far more beautiful creatures than turkeys, your best plan will be to make a camellia.

How, you will ask, can this be done. Very simply. Cut it out of a turnip, with a penknife. It really is not nearly so difficult as you would imagine. Take a sharp knife and a little scoop, and try how near you can get to making it resemble a flower. Then stick a little piece of wood into it, and tie on two or three bay-leaves. Take the feather end of a quill pen, and dip it into the cochineal bottle, and just tint the edges only.

Next stick our flower, whether real or artificial, in the turkey; the shape of the bird and a little taste will tell you about where.

A tongue can be glazed in an exactly similar manner, a curly paper frill tied round the root, and a flower placed on it.



So, too, a ham can be glazed, but there is one method of ornamenting a ham which deserves notice.

We will suppose the ham ready-glazed. Have you ever seen one, the top round the rim ornamented with a white substance which looks like beautiful white fresh butter, or even sugar?

Now it is very easy to ornament a glazed ham with this composition, and one advantage is, you can put words on the ham, such as "A Merry Christmas," or, on the occasion of a child's birthday, the name of the hero of the feast.

The way to do it is as follows:—Get some nice white clarified lard, and melt it in a cup in the oven, and add a little salad oil to it, so as to make it thinner when it is cold.

Next roll up a sheet of fairly stiff note-paper like a cone, and hold this cone near the point in the right hand. Pour a little of the hot lard into the cone, and so regulate the pressure on the paper with the right-hand thumb and finger, as to allow the melted lard to drop or run out in a very thin stream at the point. This lard will settle directly it comes out, and turn quite white on getting perfectly cold. I would advise you to practise designs on a black shining tea-tray, as it will scrape off with a spoon and do again. With a little practice and a natural gift for such things, it is wonderful what beautiful designs can be formed this way, such as a harp or a rose.

In making a spiral border round the edge of the ham, it sometimes looks a little prettier to have a small pink spot in the centre of each circle. This is done by simply colouring the melted lard with a few drops of cochineal. But I would warn you against having too much pink in ornamenting. Just a touch, as in the case of the turnip-flower, is all very well, but it must be only a touch. We wish some persons would bear this in mind in using rouge!

Another exceedingly useful supper-dish is well-cut beef sandwiches. If these are cut thin, with just a little butter, mustard, and salt, you will always find them eaten. But a word about appearances. Have them piled up on a snow-white dinner napkin, folded, if possible, at the bottom of a silver dish, and well garnished with small pieces of bright double parsley.

I need scarcely mention that every particle of crust must be cut off.

Space will not here allow of my going through all the dishes advisable to have at a nice little supper, so I will confine myself to a few general directions.

Recollect you want to please children without making them ill. Now for the purpose I would always recommend a good large corn-flour pudding, made in mould, and coloured a bright pink with cochineal. This can be made nice and sweet, and flavoured with a few drops of essence of almonds or a little essence of vanilla. The dish is simple and wholesome, and yet looks very pretty. You will most probably hear a little child say, "I will have some of that pink thing, please," and, luckily, that pink thing is the least unwholesome thing on the whole table. It is the jams and pastries that do the harm.

With regard to jelly, I would add, try and get it

bright. This requires patience and a jelly-bag. Also, as it will keep with ease, make it at least two days before you want it, so as not to drive yourself to have a lot to do on the day of the supper. In making jelly, whether orange or lemon, gelatine is the simplest, easiest, and cheapest method. Do not grudge the sherry, and put a few coriander-seeds into the jelly when boiling. You will find this a great improvement.

But we must not forget the grown-up people, and under the circumstances they enjoy a good lobster salad mayonnaise. I have given directions before how to prepare this king of cold sauces. As, however, you are making a mayonnaise salad, it is almost as easy to make two as one. Have a lobster salad and a smoked salmon salad. This smoked salmon must be cut into very thin slices, and simply placed round or mixed up in the salad just as it is, raw. If you possibly can, have these two mayonnaises placed in silver dishes, and get a few little crayfish or a few good prawns to add to the usual garnish of capers, anchovies, olives, cut hard-boiled eggs, &c., which I described a few months back.

In making mayonnaise sauce you will use two, or perhaps three, raw yolks of eggs. Now what are you going to do with the whites? Why not whip them up into a stiff froth, and use that for ornamental purposes? For instance, suppose you have that nice, simple dish, stewed pippins, on the table. Take a dessert-spoonful of foam shaped like an egg, and place it on the top of each pippin. Have also in readiness a few of those tiny, pretty little sweets called hundreds and thousands, and sprinkle a few lightly on the white egg-froth. Contrast this dish with the pippins as they were before. The change is marvellous, and yet costs almost nothing. Yet many persons would think, casting their eyes over the table, "Ah! that dish came from the pastry-cook's."

One or even two piled-up dishes of almonds and raisins, being, if there are not too many almonds, dark dishes, form a favourable contrast with the light ones. A supper-table, to look really nice, must not have too many white dishes.

If you have a large centre dish of trifle, with whipped cream on the top, a few hundreds and thousands sprinkled over it set it off. Now good whipped cream is rather beyond the powers of an ordinary cook, so if you live near a really good pastry-cook's, you will find it a good plan to have a man come round just before supper and supply the whipped cream, but make the rest of the trifle at home.

It is an exceedingly expensive dish to order, and owing to wine, brandy, and liqueurs being requisite in its composition, one of the very last dishes desirable to order. Even pastrycooks will often spoil the ship for the sake of a ha'p'orth of tar, in respect of wine. To wit, mock-turtle soup. Order a glass of sherry at a pastrycook's with your mock-turtle, and throw half of it into the soup, and see what a difference it makes.

As a few last words of advice in ornamenting your table, as well as in amusing the children—don't forget the crackers.