

refinement of form and detail, is still harmless enough and constructively right. They may be bought for about seven-and-sixpence each. For easy and arm-chairs for fireside use, an old arm-chair such as a Yorkshire rocking-chair, or some such restful type, may often be picked up for a few shillings at a broker's shop. Let the seat and back be restuffed and covered with a figured tapestry, or even cretonne, and the woodwork blacked and polished. If prejudice were not so strong,

people would look with a more favourable eye on the Windsor form of chair with wooden seat. They too like the Sussex chairs have degenerated, but old ones are often to be bought, and the simplicity and perfect constructive truth of their make is so grateful to the artistic eye, that it is surprising that they are not more used. There is an example of one of them in Mrs. Jopling's "Sympathy," a colour-print from which forms the frontispiece to the present volume of this Magazine.

THE SONG-BIRDS' DEPARTURE.

AROUND the cedars on the lawn
 The evening mists are early drawn,
 On each its cobwebs' glittering bells
 At noon of autumn's cold breath tells ;
 The woods their golden mantle wear
 To grace the passing of the year ;
 Saddest of all, resounds no trill
 From blithesome warblers—all are still.

The cuckoo long ago has fled,
 The blackcap dulled his sable head,
 The whitethroat sought more sunny climes,
 The fearful swallow left betimes ;
 O'er barren moor or stubble bright,
 The wood-wren wings her silent flight ;
 While many a whistle from the skies
 Marks where the plover southward flies.

What guides these birds to warmer lands ?
 Doth chance impose such strict commands ?
 Did myriad races die before
 Survivors sought a foreign shore ?
 Not so ; Creative Love impressed
 Upon their natures His behest,
 And still, obedient, they observe
 The charge, nor from His purpose swerve.

We grieve, but lasting song would cloy
 Capacities of sober joy ;
 And though we mourn the silent bands
 Of birds which flit to stranger lands,
 Brighter the welcome we extend
 Next April to each well-known friend,
 And more we long 'mid winter's snow
 To hear new songs when lilies blow.

M. G. WATKINS, M.A.

SECOND-COURSE DISHES.

EVERY housekeeper knows that it is very difficult to have any variety of second-course dishes in winter. Eggs are then scarce and dear, and milk is not easily procured. It was in winter that Miss Julia Hamilton first tasted a compôte of oranges, French pancakes, a shape of prunes, claret jelly, and Indian fritters.

Julia was observed by her hosts to be very meditative while she tasted these hitherto unknown delicacies one after another. At length she roused herself from her abstraction, and exclaimed, "I never saw so many nice things on the table together, Aunt Hannah ; and you always have nice things."

"Is that what you have been pondering so deeply, Julia?" asked her uncle, with a laugh. "I fancied you were thinking of the riddle I gave you to guess."

"I was trying to guess a riddle, certainly, Uncle James. It is this : how to feed Mark well and make him very comfortable on our three hundred a year. We shall not have more than that between us, and he has a good appetite, I am glad to say, and is particularly fond of sweet things."

"So are you, Julia."

"Yes, indeed, I am. I expect to eat a large portion

of my own wedding-cake. Mamma says she will give us a quarter of it to take with us on our wedding tour."

"Who could say such a dreadful thing but a bride of twenty?" cried another uncle, who was dyspeptic, and lived upon wholesome viands, provided expressly for himself by his careful sister-in-law. "Unlimited wedding-cake ! Horror ! But I have noticed that you venture rashly upon the most indigestible compounds, such as roly-poly puddings and jam tarts. If there must be a special cake for wedding breakfasts, why does not some one invent a cake that middle-aged and elderly people may partake of without injury? Your aunt is a famous cook—she should invent a new wedding-cake."

"Not until after Mark and I have eaten ours, I hope," said Julia.

Mrs. Hamilton took no notice of the compliment to her prowess as a cook—she was too well accustomed to consider herself unrivalled in that department—but she replied to her young niece's first remark, which had been occupying her mind for several minutes—

"You say you never saw these dishes before. Why, child, you have eaten them at this table over and over again. What are you thinking of?"

"Of my own table, I suppose, Aunt Hannah."

"Right, right," cried both her uncles. "Your husband's good temper will depend greatly upon the kind of dinners you give him."

"Let me make the orange compôte myself, Aunt Hannah, under your direction. Now that sweet oranges are only eightpence or ninepence the dozen, I am sure it is not an expensive dish."

"You will be a treasure to your husband," said Mr. Hamilton, the master of the house, who admired a prudent housekeeper, but who liked rich dishes and was able to eat anything.

"The compôte of oranges is particularly wholesome," observed the other uncle, nodding his cordial approval of Julia's desire to be taught to make it.

"Many girls' heads would be running upon their trousseau at such a time," said Mr. Hamilton.

"Julia does not neglect hers, I assure you," interposed her aunt.

"No," assented the bride elect, blushing; "I am anxious that my dresses should be pretty and becoming, and of the colours that Mark likes, yet not too expensive. Don't you like Aunt Hannah to wear a tasteful dress?"

"He doesn't care now, my dear; but there *was* a time," replied Mrs. Hamilton, laughing.

"Feed Mark well, and your happiness will be so much the better secured," said Mr. Hamilton.

"Be careful to give him only wholesome food," said Mr. Henry.

"And take Hannah for your example," said both gentlemen. Mrs. Hamilton and her niece left the dining-room, laughing.

The lesson took place the very next day. When the ladies went into the kitchen they found that everything was ready for the preparation of an orange compôte. Six oranges lay upon the table beside six ounces of powdered sugar. "Do you wish to do everything yourself, my dear? Well, take this knife and peel four oranges. Now cut the peel into very narrow strips and put them into this saucepan. You see, there is water enough in it to cover the chips well over. Now set the saucepan upon the range, and let the chips boil until they are quite tender. Meanwhile you can peel the two other oranges, and throw away the peel."

"It is done, aunt. What next?"

"Take as much of the white pith off the oranges as you can. Divide each orange into six parts, and take out as many seeds as possible; then sprinkle three ounces of sugar over them, and add as much warm water as will dissolve the sugar."

"And then, Aunt Hannah?"

"Nothing for the present. The chips are not tender yet, and the pieces of orange must be left for a little while until a good deal of juice runs out of them. The sugar, you observe, brings out the juice."

While these operations were taking place the ladies gave their attention to some other cookery; but the chips were soon sufficiently tender, and then Julia was directed to drain the juice off the pieces of orange into a clean saucepan, to add a little of the water in

which the rinds had been boiled, and the three remaining ounces of sugar.

"Set on the saucepan, Julia, and let it boil quickly till you have a thick syrup."

"It is thickening already," said Julia, who was stirring the contents of the saucepan with an expression of intense interest on her face.

"Yes, that will do. Set it aside, arrange the pieces of orange in a dish, put the chips in the centre, and pour the syrup over them. It may be eaten either hot or cold, and is a very popular dish."

"I know it is good, and I see it is pretty," cried Julia. "Uncle James calls it cheap, and Uncle Henry says it is wholesome."

"And I say it is useful—suitable for a family party, a company dinner, a luncheon, or a ball supper, and it is not much known."

"I should like it to be well known," returned the young housekeeper. "Now, aunt, what will you teach me next?"

"Well, dear, cook can tell you that I have always to consider my two gentlemen in ordering dinner. Your Uncle James is very fond of an apple dumpling or jam tart, and on a day that he has one I must order a second sweet dish, that Henry may have something he can eat: for instance, stewed apples to face the jam tart, or a simple pudding opposite the dumpling. But we shall have two innocent delicacies to-day, and Henry will taste them both, and praise you as you deserve. I think you said you wished to learn to make French pancakes?"

"Yes. Are they easily made?"

"Quite easily; and they are within the reach of a moderate housekeeper. Living in the country, Mark will probably keep a cow."

"Certainly; and I intend to have some fowls."

"Then you will have eggs and milk at hand—two requisites for second-course dishes. Cook, please bring me an egg. Now, Julia, as you wish to make the French pancakes entirely by yourself, I shall merely direct you. Place that egg in one scale and its weight in butter in the other. Now get the same weight of flour and of powdered sugar. Here is half a tea-cupful of rich milk."

"Are these the only ingredients?"

"Yes. Having laid them in readiness, you proceed to beat the butter to a cream; you next add the sugar, and set the basin containing the butter and sugar aside, while you beat the yolk of the egg and mix it with the milk."

"It is done, aunt."

"Well, add the flour to the butter and sugar, and mix all smoothly with the egg and milk. You have kept the white of the egg separate; whisk it to a froth, and add it last. The oven is pretty quick, and the saucers are well buttered; put the mixture into them, and bake the pancakes for twenty minutes."

The mistress of the house was absent next day, and Julia presided at the two o'clock dinner, very much to the amusement of the two gentlemen, who perceived from her heightened colour that she had had some acquaintance with the kitchen fire, and from her eager

manner when the second-course dishes were brought in that she had had some share in their concoction.

Her Uncle James pretended to doubt that she had made the shape of prunes which the little parlour-maid carried in with such a triumphant air and placed before him. It was really a noble dish, looking like a mountain of snow sprinkled over with rose-coloured crystals.

"I suppose your aunt left this masterpiece ready made—eh, Julia?"

"No one but myself had a hand in it," cried the embryo housekeeper with conscious pride; "and to convince you of this, I shall tell you exactly how I made it."

"I don't doubt you," said her Uncle Henry; "and I am going to venture upon a second helping."

"You only do me justice, but to satisfy Uncle James I must say that I put a pound and a quarter of prunes in a saucepan, covered them with cold water, set them on the fire, and boiled them for a minute or so. I then took them off, drained them through a sieve, opened them, took out the stones, and plunged the kernels into boiling water for a minute, so as to make it easy to take off their brown skins."

"I can bear you out in that, for I saw you doing it as I passed through the kitchen on my way to the yard this morning; and I must say it was a pretty sight."

Julia knit her brows in a great effort of memory, and went on. "I dissolved half an ounce of gelatine in half a pint of cold water, put it in a saucepan with four ounces of sugar, and let it boil for five minutes. I next coloured it with cochineal, placed the prunes and kernels in it, put the whole neatly into a mould, and turned it out on the dish. Cook had meantime been providing some whipped cream, and we covered the shape of prunes with it, strewing pink sugar on the top. Aunt Hannah said I might add a tea-spoonful of brandy in boiling the prunes, but I thought it was quite nice enough without it."

"And cheaper, my dear," said Mr. Hamilton.

"More digestible also," observed Mr. Henry. "I must say I am no advocate for wine or spirits in sauces and soups. I think they do away with the nourishing

property of whatever dish they are mixed with; and as to that murderous compound the Christmas pudding, part of the cruel injury it inflicts is caused by its accompanying whiskey sauce."

Mr. Hamilton laughed. "Your Uncle Henry has improved the occasion. Have you not some other delicacy to stop his mouth with—as rich and indigestible as possible?"

"He mocks at scars who never felt a wound," quoted Mr. Henry drily.

"You may always visit me in safety, Uncle Henry," said his niece, "for I shall remember your tastes. What would you do, uncle, if a guest dropped in unexpectedly just before dinner, and you wished to make an addition to the second course in a very great hurry?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I should probably look in the store-room for something."

"That is very vague," replied Julia scornfully. "You should at once make some Indian fritters. I cannot trust my memory any further, so I shall read you the recipe."

She produced her pocket-book and read as follows:

"Put three table-spoonfuls of flour into a basin, and pour over it sufficient boiling water to make it into a stiff paste, taking care to stir and beat it well, to prevent its getting lumpy. Leave it a little time to cool, and then break into it—without beating them first—the yolks of four eggs and the whites of two, and stir and beat all well together. Have ready some boiling lard or clarified dripping. Drop a dessert-spoonful of batter in at a time, and fry the fritters of a light brown. They ought to rise so much as to be almost like balls. Serve them on a hot dish, with a spoonful of jam or marmalade dropped in between each fritter."

"You will be a perfect treasure to Mark," observed Mr. Hamilton thoughtfully.

Mr. Henry rose from the table and unlocked his desk. "Here, Julia," said he, "is a twenty-pound note towards your trousseau; but I seriously beg of you not to eat plum-cake upon your wedding tour. Yours is a valuable life; I foresee that you will be really useful in your generation."

LETITIA MCCLINTOCK.

