

could talk—for she is a very quiet girl generally—when a knock was heard at the door, and Mr. Malcolm, a friend of Charlie's, whom he had invited to come in for an hour (though he had forgotten to say anything to us about it), was ushered into the room. Mr. Malcolm was very pleasant, and I liked him very much.

"The worst of it was that as soon as he appeared Jennie gave up talking. She is very shy and retiring, and though we tried to draw her out of her shell again, it was no use: she retired into it most obstinately. I fear Mr. Malcolm went away with the opinion that Charlie's sister had very little to say for herself.

"So now, my dears, you know the plan by which we are going to regulate our expenses. We shall have to think it well out before we find what sum belongs exactly to each department. You will see, too, that I, under the heading of housekeeping expenses, shall have half our income under my control. I am going to try and make it go a long way. This is how I intend to do. Charlie will pay me my share (exclusive of my portion for dress, which I shall receive sepa-

ately) every Monday morning. I shall immediately deduct from it what is required for servants' wages, gas, coal, and laundry expenses, and put the money away, then I can use what is left for housekeeping. Charlie is going to look after the other part. I believe we shall manage.

"Now I must conclude. Be sure you tell me what you think of our plans, and whether, in your opinion, we can work them out. I will write again shortly.

"MOLLY FRASER."

"Well, what do you think of the plan?" said mother, as she laid down the paper.

"I think it is excellent," said Mrs. Browne. "I wish all newly-married people had as clear an idea of what was wanted as Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fraser have."

"I don't believe in old heads on young shoulders," said auntie. "These young people think themselves very clever, but they will make mistakes, like the rest of folks, I have no doubt. They will have to learn from experience, with all their planning."

"Well, they *mean* to do what is right," said mother.

LENTIL-FLOUR, AND WHAT MAY BE DONE WITH IT.



In a previous paper I sang the praises of lentils. Let me now say a few words about the flour obtained from them after they are freed from the outer husk.

Now, lentils contain 33 per cent. of nitrogenous matter (flesh formers), 48 per cent. of carbonaceous (heat producers), 3 per cent. of mineral (bone and nerve producers), a large proportion of oil, and from 8 to 10 per cent. of water. On the score of nutrition, then, the lentil-flour recommends itself, especially in cold weather; and its price, about 4d. per pound (of any good corn-dealer or grocer), places it within the reach of all; and though but little known in its simple form, it enters largely into the composition of many foods sold under various names; and I strongly recommend it as an excellent food for children and invalids, as a basis for puddings, &c., and for many other purposes which I will endeavour to point out. In fact, an ingenious cook may make a great variety of dishes from lentil-flour.

I will commence with invalid specialities, as everybody knows the difficulty (especially when means are limited) of providing suitable food during the period of convalescence, when the patient is constantly craving for "something fresh," and would gladly welcome any change (when upon "slop diet") from the round of gruel, arrowroot, and beef-tea, so often relied on as all that is needful.

Lentil Gruel.—One table-spoonful of lentil-flour to be mixed with sufficient cold water into a paste, add a pint of boiling water, or milk if it agrees, stir well,

and boil for fifteen minutes; sweeten to taste, flavour if liked, and add a pinch of salt; an egg is an improvement.

Invalid's Pudding.—One ounce of lentil-flour and half a pint of milk. Proceed as above, but boil two minutes only; when cool add sugar to taste, and one egg; steam it in a basin for an hour, or it may be baked for a change.

Beef or mutton tea, broth, and soup of all kinds may be thickened with the flour in all cases where thickening is admissible; care, however, must be taken that the preparation really boils after the flour is added, or it will taste raw.

Porridge for children's supper or breakfast should be made in the same manner as the invalid's lentil gruel, but the proportion of flour should be doubled or nearly so, according to taste, and milk always used; but for children fed from the bottle, water and milk in equal parts, one pint to a dessert-spoonful of flour; and here let me say that if unfortunately you have a delicate child in the family, you can't do better than give a meal daily of this food, and in a very short time a marked improvement will be the result.

Now for what I may term a few "family" hints.

Family Pudding.—Four ounces of lentil-flour to be mixed with cold milk, add the rest boiling—use a quart in all—boil the whole for a minute; when cool add one egg, sugar to taste, and grated nutmeg or lemon-rind; pour into a pie-dish well greased, and bake one hour in a moderate oven, or it may be steamed for two hours, if six ounces of flour instead of four, and an extra egg, are used.

This last is good as *Yorkshire Pudding* if salt and

pepper are substituted for the sugar and flavouring; it must be baked in a shallow tin, and the surface covered with suet or dripping. It is excellent also as *Toad in the Hole*: a delicious savoury pudding may be made for the children's dinner by adding half a pound of meat cut small—fresh or the remnants of a joint—to the "batter;" season nicely, add a good pinch of dried herbs, bake as Yorkshire, and serve with gravy made from bones and thickened with lentil-flour.

Lastly, though by no means of the least importance, I will speak of soups. Here, indeed, is wide scope for the thrifty housewife to concoct a meal, delicious and satisfying, at an almost nominal cost, presuming a supply of lentil-flour is at hand.

First, then, it may always be substituted for the patent pea-flour when a bowl of soup has to be prepared hastily. Use stock if at hand; if not, water and a little extract of meat. A few drops of sauce and a pinch of herbs are a great improvement. The split lentils, too, make an excellent pudding, made in the same way as *Peas-Pudding*, to be served with boiled pork, &c., and are better than peas as the basis of a winter *purée*, being more easily digested, for they seldom disagree with any one; but don't think too much of the trouble to pass it through a sieve.

Here is a delicious family soup. Soak half a pint of-haricot beans (small ones are best) for twelve hours in cold water, to which has been added a bit of soda the size of a bean; pour off the soaking water, and put the beans into a saucepan with a quart of boiling water (though of course stock is better if handy); simmer slowly for two to three hours, as the time varies with the quality of the beans, until tender

enough to rub through a sieve; return to the saucepan, and when it boils put in two ounces of lentil-flour smoothly mixed with half a pint of milk, salt and pepper to taste, and a pinch of dried herbs; boil for twenty minutes; last of all add a few drops of lemon-juice or vinegar, and serve with toasted or fried bread.

The above may be made into a high-class white *purée* if white stock is used instead of water, and cream in place of milk.

The following *Vegetable Soup* I especially recommend; it is really excellent. Into a saucepan containing two quarts of water put a quart of vegetables, the greater variety the better—potatoes, carrots, turnips, parsnips, onions or leeks—and a good bunch of fresh parsley; the outer sticks of a head of celery, or a pinch of celery-seed, and seasoning to taste; boil until tender, and rub through a sieve. It may be thickened with lentil-flour mixed with milk as in the last recipe, but I prefer it stirred smoothly with the boiling soup, with the addition of a little sauce or ketchup, and browning salt. A few bones broken up, or a piece of milt or kidney, or any scrap of meat will improve this soup greatly, and the flavour is brought out more fully by frying the onions instead of adding them raw. Don't omit a lump of sugar, and if you have a tomato (fresh or tinned) in the house, let the soup have the benefit.

I close my paper with the remark that a use of the foregoing recipes will, I hope, be the forerunner of many tasty dishes that will suggest themselves to the mind of the experimentalist, and I doubt not that all who give lentil-flour—in any form—a fair trial will not rest satisfied until their knowledge concerning it has considerably increased.

LIZZIE HERITAGE.

A STORY ABOUT A FAMILY PORTRAIT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ARTIST AND THE MAN," "WHEN THE TIDE WAS HIGH," ETC.



ON a beautiful lawn, planted here and there with stately forest trees, and sloping down to the banks of a wide river, a little group of people were gathered together. The time was mid-afternoon, and the season was early summer.

They sat under the shade of an old cedar, through whose branches the few

patches of sky which were visible looked infinitely deep, dark, and far away; and if one might judge from the repeated and prolonged observation bestowed by various members of the party on the river

and sky, and the absence of general conversation, there seemed to be a spirit of constraint, even of dullness, in their midst.

There were two girls—one in the first bloom of her youth, and the other only just past it. The elder of these had a most remarkable face, which was scarcely so much beautiful as quaintly and deliciously interesting. The tone of the complexion was pale and even, like ivory; the hair was a dark, warm brown; and the eyes were of that deep violet colour which, in certain light, looks black. She was dressed in white, with a coloured girdle round her waist, and her dress was cut after a pretty old-world pattern, whose style went well with the character of her appearance.

The second girl was of a fresher type of beauty. To her sparkling eyes, her complexion like milk and roses, her sunny hair and small regular features, no one would have denied the epithet of pretty.

Besides these two girls, there was another, much younger, of whom it was as yet impossible to say any-