

## THE MAKING OF ENTRÉES.

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ON former occasions I have called attention to the fact that as a rule ladies take more interest in the preparation of "sweets" than in what may be called the more essential part of a dinner, viz., soup, fish, entrées, joints, and game.

We probably all of us know houses at which we visit where we can depend upon finding everything arranged to perfection so far as mere appearances go. The cloth will be properly laid, the table will be ornamented with flowers, fruit, and ice, in the arrangement of which probably as much good taste has been displayed as is seen in the toilettes of the ladies themselves.

We must, however, remember that true hospitality consists in gratifying not only the sense of sight and smell, but the sense of taste in relation to the palate. Good fruit and flowers, ices and creams are no excuse for soup like ditch-water, over-boiled fish, greasy entrées, half-cold joints, and game which was rather over-done about the time the soup was served. On the present occasion I will confine myself to that part of the dinner known as the entrées. Now with many persons who are fond of good living, but who are not blessed with robust appetites, very often the entrée course is the chief part of their meal. Ladies, not being compelled to cook, very often interfere for the sake of amusement; and I would remind these ladies of how great a treat they could give, at any rate to the male portion of their guests, if they would exercise their superior sense of "taste" in every sense of the word, and confine their attention to the entrées rather than the sweets. By way of encouragement, I can assure them that there is probably more scope for the exhibition of taste in ornamenting in entrées than in any other part of the dinner.

I will illustrate what I mean by ornamenting entrées, by giving a case in point. First we will suppose the dish to be that very common one, *Tête de veau en tortue*. We all know this dish to be composed of calf's head served in a rich brown gravy, with mushrooms, fried eggs, olives, and on great occasions, truffles. The dish is always popular, and is easy to make. Very much, however, depends on the appearance of dishes, and I will therefore describe how to ornament it. Probably the dish has been made from half a calf's head. Remove the brains immediately the head is sent home, and throw them into cold water slightly acidulated with vinegar. This assists in cleaning the brains and also helps to make them look whiter after they are boiled. The half-head must

be boiled till it is quite tender, and the liquor in which it is boiled must be reduced to assist in making the gravy. Next get a few small round red ripe tomatoes, the smaller the better, the largest not being bigger than a bagatelle-ball. These tomatoes should be placed in a small tin with a little butter in the oven to cook through, care being taken that they do not break. The brains after being boiled should be formed into little round white lumps the same size as the tomatoes; a black truffle should be picked out and cut into thin slices about the size of a shilling; the red tomatoes and white brains should be placed alternately round the base of the dish, and the small pieces of black truffle should be neatly pressed into each little white ball of brains. The ear should stand up in the middle of the dish, and should be made to look like fresh French-polished mahogany by means of a little bright glaze. This bright glaze is very easily made, and I will explain how to do it by-and-by. In adding mushrooms to the dish, I of course presume that the cook has used a tin of mushrooms. Some of the largest of these should have been put by to ornament the dish. They should be kept hot, but at the last moment before the dish is sent to table, the tops of these mushrooms should be dipped in the same glaze that was used for the ear. We have now for ornamenting purposes the command of the three colours, red, white, and black. To these we may add the colour green. Stoned French olives are used in making the dish, and there is no harm in adding a little fresh bright green parsley, if the parsley is properly fried and not over-cooked or burnt up, with a little ingenuity, the sprigs may be stuck in the stoned olive, the stalk going into the empty place where the stone had been.

Any lady who possesses the requisite taste for arranging flowers (and we all know how very rarely this can be done properly by the ordinary run of servants) will have no difficulty whatever in making an exceedingly handsome dish if she acts on the suggestions I have thrown out with regard to colour. I think that this dish is a very good illustration of a large class of entrées dependent upon that great base in cooking, good brown gravy. In the first place, the expense is not great, with perhaps the exception of the truffles. Half a calf's head can generally be obtained for from half-a-crown to three-and-sixpence. Tins of mushrooms are now exceedingly cheap. Ripe red tomatoes can be obtained fresh during the greater part of the year, and when they cannot, they can always be procured preserved whole in tins. The best part of the calf's head can be used for making the entrée one day, but all the bones, trimmings, &c., can be utilised for mock-turtle soup the day after, and all the meat that is left from the entrée can be put in the soup as well as the gravy used in making it. With regard to



the truffles, cooks must remember that when they are used for ornamental purposes only, a very little will go a very great way. I do not know what is the smallest quantity of truffle that can be bought at a time, but it is wonderful what an enormous show can be made with a single truffle no bigger than a child's marble, if this truffle be cut with a very sharp knife into thin slices—of course, the thinner the slice the greater the show. These black round truffles are very effective in ornamenting dishes, especially if we have any red to contrast with them. Indeed, in ornamenting entrées, I should never wish for more colours than red, white, black, and green. Black truffle can always be introduced as an ornament in conjunction with any kind of white forcemeat.

In making *Tête de veau en tortue*, some persons add fried eggs. When these are used, care must be taken that the eggs are fried a nice golden-brown colour on both sides. Sometimes, instead of fried eggs, egg balls are used. The yokes of hard-boiled eggs by themselves are very good for the purpose, but are rather expensive unless eggs are very plentiful.

Another ornament that can be used for this dish, as well as many other entrées, is cocks' combs. Cocks' combs are sold in bottles, and can be obtained fairly cheap. They are already cooked and simply want warming up in some good gravy. These combs, owing to their shape, are very useful for ornamental purposes. Suppose, for instance, to carry out my system of ornamenting with red, white, and black, we take four cocks' combs, and from the centre of a red tongue cut out four pieces with a stamp or knife exactly the same shape as the comb, and also take a large black truffle and cut four slices out of it, and make them all alike both in shape and size. These now placed alternately round any dish would have a very pretty appearance. The cocks' combs and red tongue are made hot in some bright clear glaze, which of course improves their appearance, just as a piece of polished mahogany is superior to a piece of plain wood.

Probably many of you will say that the cost of a truffle sufficiently big to cut slices from as large as a cocks' comb would be very considerable. This is undoubtedly the case; and supposing you cannot afford to buy more than what are called quarter-bottles of truffles, the price of which is about two shillings, you can proceed as follows; but remember, that a two-shilling bottle, if the truffles are used only for ornamental purposes, ought to last a long time and not be all used up for one dish. Take a little piece of truffle and cut a thin piece as finely as possible with a very sharp knife, so as to make a quantity of little black specks as big round as a small pea, and as thin, say, as a five-pound note. You will find it is wonderful how many "black specks" you can make out of one small piece.

Now place the red tongue and white cocks' combs round the dish alternately, and take these little black specks and place one on the middle of each round on the outer edge of the comb. They will, so to speak, resemble the eyes in a peacock's tail.

Again, supposing you do not feel justified in running

into the expense of buying a bottle of cocks' combs. If you have the remains of a tongue in the house, or even the lean part of a ham, and also the remains of a cold chicken or turkey, or even a piece of roast or boiled veal, by means of a tin cutter, which can be bought for a few pence, you can stamp out pieces of thin white chicken, turkey, or veal, and pieces of red ham or tongue. If you use a cutter, of course all the pieces will be exactly the same size, and the dish will look very neat.

In order to bring myself down to the requirements of all families, I would suggest to the housekeeper to make a preliminary experiment with a dish, say, of minced beef. Suppose you have by you the remains of a piece of boiled salt beef and a bit of veal cutlet. The outside of the beef is red, the inside of the cutlet is white. With a sharp knife cut some thin slices of red beef and white veal. Take your cutter and stamp them out, mince up the remains of the beef and veal together, flavour it in the ordinary way with a little chopped onion, or what I would personally prefer, a bead of garlic. Make the mince of a proper consistency, that is, like properly prepared mortar, and not little lumps of meat swimming in gravy. Now place your little stamped pieces of red and white round the edge of the dish. Make the mince oval on the top and pile it up, and use two pieces of red and two white of these cut-up shapes as a centre ornament. A tiny piece of green parsley might be placed in the middle.

Of course these little red and white imitation cocks' combs would look a great deal nicer if we had little black pieces of truffle round the edge, but in a dish of this kind of course truffle is out of the question. But there is a very simple substitute; in fact, for a dish of hash or mince it is, if anything, superior in flavour. Take a pickled walnut, and pick out rather a hard one, then the outside of the walnut can be used for making black specks. Pickled walnuts are often used to flavour hashed beef; and in a dish of hash or mince, a few whole pickled walnuts may be placed round the edge as an ornament; or the pickled walnuts can be cut in half, as too much is to be avoided. Take the walnuts out of the pickle half an hour before they are used and place them on a cloth or piece of blotting paper, and let them drain, as you must avoid making the hash or mince acid.

In almost all entrées we should be perfectly helpless unless we had some good brown gravy to start with. This must be always made the day before. It is no use attempting to make an entrée and beginning to make the gravy on the same day as the entrée is required to be served. In making good brown gravy the first thing necessary is a piece of knuckle of veal. Suppose you take, say, three pounds of knuckle of veal; chop it up, bone and all, with a chopper, and place it in a good-sized saucepan with an onion, a carrot, the trimmings of a head of celery, and a handful of parsley—the onion may be stuck with a few cloves, say six. Fill the saucepan with cold water, and let it simmer by the side of the fire. If possible, add to it the trimmings of a ham, a small ham-bone, or



even a bacon-bone that contains no fat. After the whole has boiled or simmered (for it does not matter allowing it to boil after the first two hours) for the best part of a day, let it boil away till there is only a quart of liquor left. Then strain it off into a basin, cover it over with a cloth, and let it settle. I would advise the cook now to add a quart of fresh water to what is left in the saucepan, and put it on, and make what is called a "second stock." When the quart of gravy that has been poured off is quite cold, it will be a firm jelly with a good deal of sediment at the bottom, but the top part will be bright enough for practical purposes after the fat has been removed. Of course it can be cleared with white of egg. The upper part of the stock should be used for the bright glaze, and the bottom part for the brown gravy. The brown gravy should be thickened with brown flour, or better still, flour made brown by being fried in butter, which is called brown roux. The clear gravy can be made sufficiently thick with a very little arrowroot. It is, of course, better to make it thick by boiling it away, but this is rather expensive. It will be observed that,

although I have used knuckle of veal, I have not recommended any gravy beef. The reason of this is that extract of meat will be found cheaper and better when veal is used. The veal is sufficient to make the gravy a firm jelly when it is cold; the extract of meat gives it flavour and colour. When these two gravies have got cold and the fat has been carefully removed from both, the brown gravy should be the colour of Spanish mahogany. The bright gravy, or as I have called it, glaze, should have the appearance of bright golden sherry.

A brimming tea-spoonful of extract of meat should be added to each pint of gravy. When the brown gravy has been thickened with brown flour or brown roux, it should be passed, after boiling, through a fine sieve.

In large establishments, of course, extract of meat would never be required, as the stock which is made in very considerable quantity is boiled down to a glaze, and the glaze is allowed to acquire colour over the fire before water is added. Extract of meat saves house-keepers in small establishments this troublesome operation.

## THE GATHERER: AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION AND DISCOVERY.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article submitted.

### A Shadowless Hanging Lamp.



A pendent lamp which is designed to cast no shadow is illustrated by the accompanying woodcut. The design of the lamp, as may be seen, is such that the solid, opaque supports beneath the flame are reduced to a very small size so as not to obstruct the light of the flame below. The ring shown is the oil-

holder, and the oil passes to the wick by the fine tubular supports of the central portion of the lamp. Brackets on the side of the framework support the shade. The lamp is intended to burn petroleum or other oils.

### The Power of a Whale's Tail.

A Glasgow engineer, Mr. John Henderson, has calculated the horse-power of a blow from the tail of a large whale, and finds it to be 145 horse-power

when the whale is propelled by it at the rate of twelve miles an hour. His calculations were based on a "finner" whale eighty feet long, and weighing seventy-four tons. The width of the tail, between the tips of the flanges, was about twenty feet. These great leviathans sometimes come into British waters, a well-known specimen being that seen at Longniddry, in Scotland. They are believed to attain a speed of twelve knots an hour. Greenland whales can go at the rate of eight or nine knots an hour.

### Sheet-Brass Bells.

Small bells are now manufactured out of sheet-metal instead of being cast. They are formed by a single stroke of the die or press, and are quite as resonant as the cast-metal ones for household use and telephone call-bells. As many as twenty-five to thirty per minute can be turned out in this way, and, the surface being smooth, they require little polishing.

### The Life of the Sun.

Sir William Thomson, the well-known physicist, has calculated, on the theory of Helmholtz, as to the maintenance of solar heat, that the sun has been capable of supplying heat to the earth sufficient to sustain life for twenty million years, and that it is capable of continuing to do so for ten millions more. The theory of Helmholtz is to the effect that solar heat is kept up