

luncheon-time my cousin, whom I had never seen, but often heard of as the incarnation of all that was detestable, presented himself, I found him to be as nice and as pleasant as his wife.

Altogether, it was a wonderful day to me, for whilst Mrs. Courthope went to dress, to take me in her carriage to the station, and I remained in the drawing-room turning over photograph books and looking about me at all the pretty things with the eager curiosity of nineteen, the door opened, and Oliver walked in.

Somehow there was something in his face which put me all in a tremble; in a moment, as by a flash of inspiration, I knew what was coming, and when, two minutes later, he was telling me that he loved me, and wanted to make me his wife, my heart was beating so that I could not answer him. But I suppose he understood me, for he went with me to the station,

and the last thing I saw as I steamed back to Croyland was his face smiling at me from the platform.

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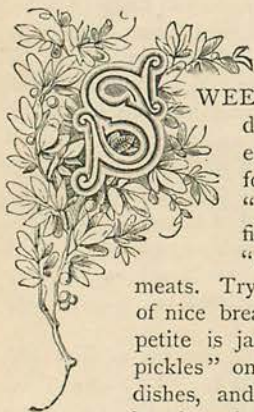
Oliver and I were married the very same day that Mrs. Vibart exchanged her name for that of Lewis, and became the wife of another very rich City man.

"Ah! dearest," said my husband, as we stood together on the deck of the steamer that was to bear us across to America—our wedding trip—where my father, although still far from well, was on the high road to recovery, "what should I have done if she had accepted me? I had proposed to Lilah Maurice; I was not prepared for Lilah Vibart, and the moment I saw her come into the room in Half Moon Street I felt that my old love was as dead as if I had seen her in her coffin. There was not a bit of Lilah Maurice left about her."



## A CHAPTER ON "SWEET PICKLES."

BY P. HOWARD DAVIS.



"SWEET Pickles!" What a paradox! yet what a bewitching, entrancing, delicious novelty for our English tables! Try "sweet pickles" with hot meats, fish, stews, ragouts, &c. Try "sweet pickles" with cold meats. Try "sweet pickles" with a piece of nice bread and butter when your appetite is jaded or cloyed. Put "sweet pickles" on your table in pretty glass dishes, and note how your friends will be pleased with, and surprised at, this innovation. We use chutneys, why not then use the "sweet pickles" which are so popular in the United States?

Ah! perhaps you don't like the peculiar name. Well, "there's not much in a name," says somebody, and as Shakespeare remarks—"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," so would "sweet pickles" be equally delicious if called anything else. Possibly you would like the words "spiced fruits" better; that being so, "spiced fruits" they shall be.

Of course there are varieties of these spiced fruits too numerous to mention; by this I don't mean variety in the fruits, but variety in the methods of preparation and the consequent results. All are good, but some are good—for nothing.

My fancy takes me into an English kitchen, where everything is as clean as paint; the housewife or cook wears a nice white apron, weighs and measures all her ingredients, and follows implicitly the instructions

given in CASSELL'S MAGAZINE—a copy of which lies open before her on the kitchen table for frequent reference. From such a source our "sweet pickles" or "spiced fruits" will be delicious enough to set before a king.

The very best and nicest all-round "spiced fruits" (for we will so name them) are made by the undeviating rule of proportion as under:—

7 lbs. pared and trimmed ripe fruit.	
4 lbs. pounded white sugar.	
1 pint strongest malt vinegar.	
Whole cinnamon,	} To taste.
" cloves,	
" ginger,	
	} Tied up in muslin.

A few of the special, fine, delicate, or extra juicy fruits require the proportions to be varied, and of these particular mention will be made. Apples, peaches, and pears should be peeled; stone fruits of all kinds, tomatoes, and fruits with thin but toughish skins, should be "docked" or pricked; fine berries will be treated of elsewhere.

The method is simple. Lay the prepared fruit in a preserving kettle, in alternate layers, with the sugar; heat slowly—very slowly—till all comes just to a boil, when at once add and stir in the vinegar and spice. Allow five minutes' actual boiling—not more—and then remove the pan from the fire. With a skimmer pick out the fruit and allow it to cool; put the syrup, with the spices in it, back on the fire, and let it boil till quite thick. By this time the fruit (being only lukewarm) should have been put in slightly warmed glass bottles, pots, or jars, and the thick boiling syrup should be poured in over it. Let all get stone-cold, and then

close the spiced fruit in such a way as to render it air-tight.

Let me give a word or two of kindly warning. Sometimes it happens that the spiced fruit (if not quite air-tight) will show signs of fermentation. The reasons for this are twofold: first, the contents are not air-tight; and, second, the fruit has been removed from the pan with too much of the half-cooked syrup adhering to it. The remedy is to draw the corks or coverings of the vessels the fruit is in, and then, while uncovered, stand them in a large pan, with enough cold water to reach within an inch or so of the mouths. Put the pan on the fire till the fruit is scalding hot, but not boiled. When cold, seal the bottles, &c., so that they *will be* air-tight.

These spiced fruits improve very much with age, and should rarely be eaten in less than a month from the time they are prepared.

#### EXTRA RECIPES.

*Blackberries.*—The best proportions are: Seven pounds of picked, dry, ripe, fresh fruit, to three and a half pounds of sugar, one quart of best strong vinegar, one and a half ounces each of cloves and cinnamon, and half an ounce of whole ginger. The method is as given above.

*Cherries.*—I shall have to allow my readers to use discretion in putting up this spiced fruit; it varies rather considerably in the quantity of saccharine matter it contains, and no rule can be laid down to apply to black, red, and white cherries, and the varieties of each. The formula I have generally adopted for black cherries will be a guide—simply that, and nothing more. Fourteen pounds of picked, dry, sound fruit, four pounds of white sugar, one gallon of the strongest brown (malt) vinegar, and a table-spoonful each of ground cloves and ground cinnamon tied in a piece of thick clean calico.

*Currants.*—The same remark applies as to cherries. My proportions for black currants were: Eight quarts of berries—free from stalk, leaves, &c.—four pounds of sugar, and only one pint of vinegar—with spices as for cherries. These require an hour's boiling, and are not fit for use in less than three months.

*Green Gooseberries.*—Eight quarts of trimmed fruit to six and a half pounds of sugar, one pint of best vinegar (the fruit is very acid itself), and one ounce each of whole cloves, cinnamon, allspice, and ginger. Use half the sugar to all the berries, and a tumblerful of water (or slightly more), and allow to boil from two to three hours, according to the class of fruit. When nearly done, add the rest of the sugar, and boil all for half an hour. When *quite* done, remove from the fire, add the spices and vinegar, stir, cover the pan with its lid, and stand at the side of the fire to simmer for another half-hour.

*Pears.*—Peel, core, and quarter a peck of nice juicy and sweet pears. Steam them over boiling water till they are so perfectly tender as to go into pulp if squeezed between the thumb and finger. Remove, and allow to get cold. Make a syrup with three pounds of sugar, one and a half pints of vinegar, and half a pint

of fresh cider, in which is a small bag of the usual mixed spices. When the syrup thickens, put the fruit gently in, and let all boil for half an hour. Now bottle, &c., as usual.

These spiced pears will be found to be the very pink of perfection for imparting a particularly appetising zest to made dishes and entrées of all kinds. They are also excellent when spread on bread and butter, or taken with blancmange or oatmeal porridge—in fact, "sweet pickled pears" are the handiest things imaginable in a house.

Many years ago, when I lived in California, I knew a lady from Florida who made the most exquisite sweet pickles of lemon and orange peels that I ever tasted. They were the envy of our social circle, and were sent far and wide as special presents. A bottle of Madame B——'s sweet lemon pickle was something to be proud of; it was something which nobody could match, and its preparation was most religiously kept as a mystery. Madame B—— was inexorable; she had "taken great pains to perfect the recipe, and it was preposterous to expect it to be given away, as though it was of no value." But on the eve of my departure for Europe, the old lady relaxed her arbitrary decision; she unbent, and positively gave me the recipe! Unfortunately, I have never been able to personally put it to use during the whole seventeen years I have had it, but I have given copies of it to my friends very frequently, and have always heard it highly spoken of. Here it is:—

#### SWEET LEMON PICKLE.

Cut the rinds from the lemons and oranges in large pieces, and then with a sharp knife shave away as much of the inner white pith as will only leave a paper thickness of it adhering to the yellow. Use three parts of lemon-peel to one part of orange-peel. Cut these rinds into pretty cuttings, thin strips, dice, &c., or with small tin pastry-cutters into various small-sized designs. Make a brine of salt, saltpetre, and water, strong enough to float an egg on its surface; put the cut rinds into it, and allow them to remain there for ten days. Take them out of the brine, and put them into clean water to soak, changing the water daily, for another ten days. On the twenty-first day strain the rinds, and wash them by holding them in a colander under the water-tap; then cover the rinds with clear water in the preserving-kettle, heat slowly, and boil for just five minutes. Now take the rinds out, *plunge them instantly into ice-water*, and leave them in it till next day, when strain it off, and give the peels a very, very gentle boil up for five minutes in strong alum-water; simmer very gently in this, as a hard boil will ruin them. Change *directly* from the alum to the ice-water again, and let the rinds lie in it quite undisturbed for four hours. It is now time to boil up again; use the same water as the peels are in, boil for five minutes, and let them lie over-night in the water they were boiled in, so that they will be nice and tender. Twenty hours after, strain away the water, and put the rinds in the preserving-pan, with enough fresh cold water to cover them, and sufficient

sugar to make it sweet, but not a syrup. Let the rinds simmer gently in this for ten minutes; strain them, and spread them on large dishes to cool. (The sweet lemon-water from the last boiling makes a pleasant beverage.)

The actual syrup is now to be prepared. This requires sugar to the same weight as the peels, half a pint of water for every two pounds of sugar, and half an ounce of sliced white ginger to every gallon of the finished pickle. Melt the sugar in the stew-pan, and when the syrup is quite hot, but not boiling, put the rinds into it, replace the lid, and simmer them till they look quite clear. Take them out; spread them on dishes to cool once more, and commence to work up the syrup by putting into it: for every pound

of sugar, one pint of the strongest malt vinegar; to every gallon of finished pickle, one heaped-up table-spoonful of powdered turmeric; also put in mace and cinnamon, or cloves and allspice, to taste. Boil up this syrup to perfect it into a fine, bright, golden-yellow, thick liquid, and then put in the rinds for a final slow simmering of fifteen minutes' duration. Remove from the fire, and, when slightly cooled, fill into glass jars or bottles, and seal them up air-tight.

This recipe is seemingly complicated and troublesome, but will amply repay all the requisite attention. One taste of the resulting pickle will be a reward which is not to be soon forgotten or thought lightly of. In my own case, the enchanting flavour of it, seventeen years ago, haunts me still.

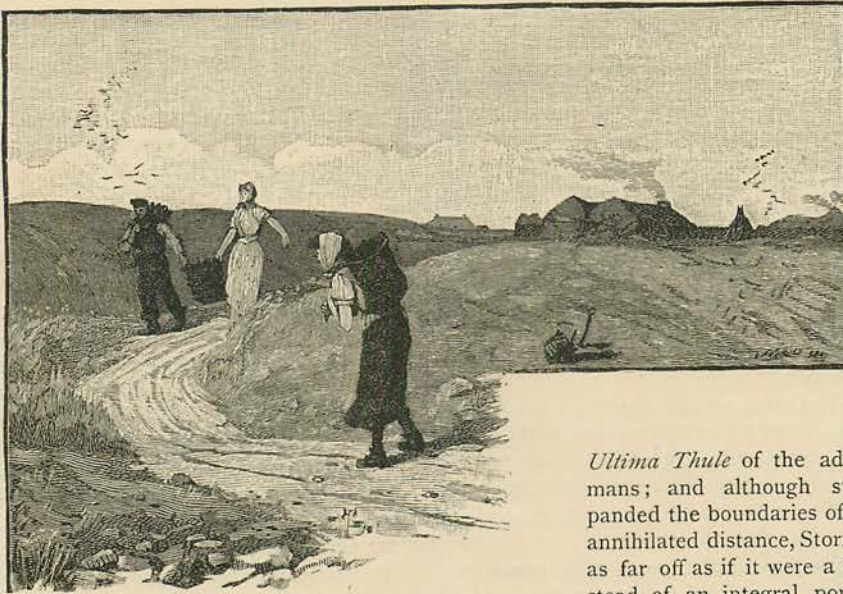
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FAR-AWAY STORNOWAY.

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POTATO-LIFTING.

**M**R. WILLIAM BLACK, whose charming story, "A Princess of Thule," is the best possible guide to the inhospitable Hebrid Isle of which Stornoway is the capital, contends that whoever has been to the Lewis knows that ever after it remains in his memory as a strangely remote and inaccessible place, "seeming further away than Gibraltar, or Newfoundland, or St. Petersburg, or any spot, indeed, that is a familiar geographical expression." The brilliant novelist accounts for this fancy, arising in part from the exceeding loneliness and desolate grandeur of the scenery on the West Coast of Scotland. The Lewis was certainly the

*Ultima Thule* of the adventurous Romans; and although steam has expanded the boundaries of the world and annihilated distance, Stornoway remains as far off as if it were a Fiji island, instead of an integral portion of Great Britain. It is near to us, and yet it seems remote. If time is an object, you can get from Glasgow to Stornoway and back within the week, having an entire day to explore the interesting island, and enjoying a sea-voyage, in a swift, and even luxurious steamer, that in its scenic glories, its historical associations, and its health-inspiring air, is not surpassed in the wide world. If you wish to still more economise your hours, and are at the same time prepared to sacrifice a little of your enjoyment, you can travel by train to Stromie Ferry and take the steamer thence to the island of Lewis. There is for the tourist tribe an even more accelerated route, whereby you can be in Inverness in the morning and at Stornoway at night. The passenger leaves Inverness for Garve by