

Nance. "Oh, Hugh is very clever, only he will be so absurd over it."

"It's a very good thing he is," said Oliver. "I should have been as dull as an owl if I hadn't had Hugh to mock at me at intervals. You will have to do it now, Nance, or I shall get too stupid."

But Nance was thinking deeply. At last she said—

"I want you to do something for my sake, Oliver."

He looked at her grave face in surprise.

"Yes, dear?" he said.

"I want you to forgive Charlie, and make friends with him again."

Oliver's brow darkened. He could hardly refuse her, but he said nothing.

"It was all my fault that anything ever came between you, and I should like to make peace with him," went on Nance. "Of course we can't feel the same to him—we never could—but we might be ordinary friends again. You might forgive him now."

But even the tender little pleading hesitation of the last words could not soften Oliver. He shook his head.

"It is just as you said yourself, he has not altered his character. I know what he is now. He can never be my friend again."

"Then I shall pack up and go home!" said Nance, and rose suddenly. "I told you that you would show

your temper to me before you had done!" she cried, pouting and laughing.

"When did you ever say I had a temper before, Nance?" asked Oliver, rising too.

"That day in the brake, driving home from the cricket match. Don't you remember? I did not say your name, but I meant you. Have you forgotten?"

"Is it likely?" he answered, and drawing out a pocket-book he produced a little strip of crimson cambric. "Did you ever see that before?"

Nance blushed for very happiness.

"Did you keep that all this time? But—but you did not care for me then?" she asked shyly.

"Did I not?" he asked. "Did I not love you from the moment I saw you?"

"Then you ought to be very happy now, and when we are very happy, Oliver, we ought to show we are grateful by forgiving others."

She laid a little hand upon his arm, and looked up at him with serious eyes.

Oliver's arm was round her in a moment. "Nance, you are an angel," he said.

"No, it is a leaf out of your own book," she answered.

"No, it is all your own; but you are right. I can forgive any one for anything while I have you, my own! Come, let us go home."

And they moved slowly away across the shining fields, "in that new world which is the old."

HOLIDAY FARE: INDOORS AND OUT.



NO seaside trip this year, then: that is agreed; at the same time, we will enjoy ourselves, and do our best to economise in our housekeeping to counteract the extravagance of you good folks on the grand tour."

Beatrice French, the speaker, was a bright girl of eighteen, the idol of her three young brothers, who were to be entrusted to her care during the absence

of their parents, who were quitting their native country for the first time, and joining some old friends in a visit to sunny France; and the two daughters of the said friends were to stay with Beatrice meanwhile, and were looking forward eagerly to the pleasant country visit, their own home being in a large manufacturing town; while the thought of meeting them, coupled with the pleasure of seeing her mother depart for her much-needed change, quite effaced any passing regret for the loss of her own annual outing from Beatrice's mind.

When the eventful day arrived which brought the guests, a right merry party they were: full of plans for walks and talks, fishing and boating excursions, to say nothing of a modest garden party and picnic. Lastly, the dinners were discussed; and as Myra, the

elder of Beatrice's friends, had acquired a practical knowledge of cookery, both English and foreign, she offered to give her the benefit of her experience by catering for the first week; Frances, her sister, and Beatrice taking a turn afterwards, to which both agreed, "if only Myra would act as honorary consulting cook," and help them through any difficulties. Frances's suggestion that notes should be made of the most successful of their dishes was voted a good one, and the boys promised to act as judges, and to earn their fare by bringing home some good catches of fish.

"Do," said Beatrice: "for particularly I want Myra to show me some nice ways of cooking fish. She is *au fait* in that line, also in preparing vegetables; and she is quite delighted at the prospect of having access to an unlimited supply of fresh herbs."

"That I am," said Myra, who had just come in from a stroll round the garden; "and our dinner to-day shall prove my partiality, as I mean it to include *Summer Soup* and *Stuffed Marrow*. The soup came to me *minus* a name, and some of my friends call it 'green soup'; but everybody likes it, and that is something." The mode was very simple:—A quart of water and a good bunch of parsley, and a sprig each of thyme, marjoram, and fennel, with a few tarragon leaves, were boiled for half an hour, then the liquor strained

into another utensil, when some green peas, endive, lettuce, spinach (parboiled), and French beans, all finely shredded, were added in sufficient quantity; a morsel of sugar, salt, white pepper, and butter were also put in, and as soon as the vegetables were tender, the whole was passed through a hair sieve, then returned to the pan and re-heated, a little boiling milk and cream being stirred in at the last minute. This soup was served with a plate of fried bread cut into the tiniest possible dice. "If you are partial to a meaty flavour, leave out the milk and cream, and put in a little extract of meat or glaze," said Myra, "or simmer a bit of lean ham with the rest; but the pure vegetable flavour is what I think so pleasant, and you have the satisfaction of knowing that your dinner is acting as a blood-purifier."

The marrow, which had been split lengthwise and the seeds removed, had been filled with a forcemeat made of equal parts of bread-crumbs, minced bacon, and veal, there being a cold joint of the latter in the house; it was well seasoned with herbs, and "bound" with an egg beaten up with a spoonful of cream. This was then stewed with a little gravy made from the bones of the veal, and kept hot while the stock was thickened and flavoured; it was then poured round the marrow, and served at once. Cucumbers were very nice the same way, Myra told them, and if no bacon was available for the forcemeat, butter could be used, *not* suet—that should be reserved for dishes which need long cooking, suet being very indigestible *unless* well cooked.

Of the first catch of trout, some were stewed, and proved excellent eating. After being washed and dried, they were browned all over in a little hot butter, then simmered in a liquor made with a pint of water and a little vinegar or lemon-juice, a bay-leaf and a morsel of chopped onion being added to flavour; the gravy was thickened with corn-flour, seasoned, and poured round the fish. The remaining trout were wrapped in oiled papers, and baked, after first being immersed in vinegar for a few minutes, then dried. All agreed that both methods were great improvements on boiled trout.

"I've had a recipe given to me for making *Tomato Jelly*," said Myra, next day. "If you like, Beatrice, I'll make a little; it is delicious with cold meat of all kinds." All hailed the proposition with delight, and the girls carefully watched Myra's nimble fingers tearing into pieces the ripest fruit she could find, which she just covered with water, and set in a jar in the oven until it was pulpy. After draining through a clean cloth, she measured the juice and added loaf-sugar in the proportion of fourteen ounces to each pint; then boiled them together quickly in a preserving-kettle until a little poured on a plate immediately jellied. Careful skimming and a clear fire being very necessary, the girls made a special note of them.

A novel form of *Fish Pie* was then suggested by Myra, which was quite as enjoyable eaten cold as hot—that she considered a great recommendation in preparing summer dinners, as it lessened the cooking, and she knew that a tasty cold dish is often more

acceptable to the palate on a sultry day than the most expensive hot one. For this, soles were chosen, though, as Myra explained, any kind of white fish was equally suitable. The bones and dark skin being first removed, the fish, about two pounds, was cut into pieces of a convenient size, and piled in a dish, each piece being sprinkled with salt, pepper, lemon-juice, chopped capers, and parsley. A teaspoonful of flour, a couple of eggs, and half a pint of milk were then beaten in a basin, and poured over the fish; a thin flaky crust laid on, and the pie baked in a quick oven.

"Why must it be white fish?" inquired one of the girls.

"Because," said Myra, "the eggs and milk form, when cold, a savoury custard, and if you used oily fish—salmon for instance—it would be too rich for most people. And speaking of oily fish reminds me of a nice way of cooking mackerel. Remove the back-bones of two, spread the inner side with veal stuffing, well seasoned with herbs, press them together, and bake them about half an hour. You may either cover them with a greased paper or baste them occasionally with a little fat. If to be eaten hot, make a gravy in the tin, and flavour it with vinegar, or tomato or mushroom ketchup, or they are delicious eaten cold with lemon-juice or vinegar."

"Thanks," said Beatrice; "and will you show me how to make a good tomato sauce? Father says ours always tastes too much of the water; but he is wrong, for I know no *water* is added."

"Perhaps it is made too thin," said Myra. "No doubt your father means tomato purée. If you'll find half a dozen ripe tomatoes, you can make some in a short time, and it will be such a delicious addition to the poached eggs we decided upon for one of our dishes to-day; but if you will boil some macaroni it will be still better. It makes such a tempting-looking dish—the macaroni piled in the centre, the sauce poured round, and the eggs in a circle outside the sauce; or you can have boiled rice instead of the macaroni. But now for the *Purée*. Break the tomatoes up, and put them in the small enamelled pan with an ounce or so of butter, a good pinch of salt and pepper, and half a teaspoonful of white sugar; put the lid on, and let them cook very gently. They will take about twenty minutes; then you must pass them through the hair sieve."

"Is that all? that *is* easy," said Beatrice.

"Yes; but unless you could have found very ripe ones you must have added a little liquid—stock from bones, or a spoonful of gravy or vinegar. Of course, the dish with which you intend serving it must guide you in the seasoning. Sometimes bay-leaves and other herbs are added, but you will find *that* very good."

"Oh! and Frances wants to make 'a sort of pie,' as she calls it, which she saw you concoct once. She says it wants no cooking. What can it be?"

"I think she means a lobster pie," said Myra. "I suppose, from Frances asking this, that, instead of you two taking a turn each, you are more inclined to work together now my week has ended?"

"Yes; we agreed between ourselves to do so, and make the most of our time," replied Beatrice.

"Very well; then suppose *you* set to work on the pie, while Frances prepares the veal, which we shall stew for dinner to-morrow."

Beatrice was then told to cut up the contents of a tin of lobster in small pieces.

"Don't shred it, or it will eat tough," said Myra; "and season it with a little vinegar (a few drops of which should be tarragon), a pickled gherkin cut small, and a teaspoonful of essence of anchovies." The lobster was then packed tightly in a small deep pie-dish, and the top covered with mustard-and-cress, shredded lettuce, and minced cucumber, which had been dressed with oil, vinegar, and pepper in the usual way. "Now for the garnish," Myra went on. "You want two eggs boiled hard; the whites you can chop up, the yolks should be passed through the hair sieve and sprinkled all over with a little green stuff—anything you like, cress, parsley, capers, or gherkins, and, when obtainable, a few strips of beetroot are very effective in addition. For ordinary occasions you will find this pie very good, even *minus* the eggs." And so it proved.

"I am glad we thought of the veal," continued Myra. "It will be as nice this way as if braised in a braising-pan proper, which few people have, though, in England. It is a good way of cooking in hot weather, too—it takes so little fire, for the slower it cooks the better." A thick slice from a fillet of veal was then laid on the table, and spread with a forcemeat, to which some chopped mushrooms had been added. It was then rolled up and tied with tape, and laid in a stewpan with an assortment of fresh vegetables at the bottom. Some stock (made from the shank on the previous day) was poured over, the lid put on, and the whole stewed gently for three hours. While Frances dished it and placed some rolls of broiled bacon round the dish, Beatrice strained the stock into a clean pan, thickened it with a little brown roux, and then poured it round the meat.

"It looks very good," said Myra; "but any time you want a little extra garnish, place slices of lemon between the rolls of bacon, or, if you have mushrooms in the stuffing, as to-day, some button mushrooms fried or broiled would be suitable."

"Why not use the vegetables?" asked Beatrice.

"Oh, they have parted with their goodness: the meat has absorbed it. If you ever add any they must be freshly-boiled ones—carrots and turnips cut into dice are suitable—then you can add the trimmings to the stewpan first. It is an economical plan."

Dinner in a wood close by had been arranged for the following day—just a homely picnic, the party consisting of the young people and some old school-fellows. Nothing elaborate was to be provided, but "a nice plain summer dinner," as the girls called it. A collared tongue was in readiness, and Beatrice expressed regret that it could not be glazed. "But I know there is no glaze," she said.

"But," replied Myra, "I know that both gelatine and extract of meat are in the cupboard, so we are quite independent of glaze. I often make some like this," putting, as she spoke, half an ounce of gelatine in half a pint of water. "That is the first thing; let this soak for an hour or so, then stir it over the fire until dissolved, and put in a teaspoonful of extract of meat, and you can give the tongue two or three coats—using the pastry-brush—but let each one get dry before you add the next. And, if you like, you can treat the chicken in the same way. You know we did bone it before it was boiled, and the bones are simmering now, and as soon as the stock is reduced to a teacupful or thereabouts it will do."

"Any gelatine?" was the inquiry.

"Yes, just a little," said Myra, "as the weather is so warm; in cold weather it would set without. Now, you had better commence your sweets, and there will be nothing left for the morning but the salad. We can boil the vegetables to-night, for I think you said you would like a vegetable salad?"

"Yes, it will be a change," said Beatrice; and the result of their labours was a very delicious dish, consisting of *cooked* green peas, kidney beans, cauliflower divided into sprigs, and sliced potatoes; the *uncooked* portion being composed of tomatoes and cucumber sliced, lettuce and endive, cress and radishes, and a little tarragon and chervil, the dressing being taken in a wide-necked bottle to pour over just before serving.

"What a mixture this salad is!" was the remark of one of the boys.

"Yes; thanks to the garden. If we had had to buy all the ingredients we must have left some out, I dare say," was Myra's reply.

The sweets proved a success, though inexpensive; one, a *Chocolate Pyramid*, being especially enjoyed, for which a quart of milk, a little sugar, two ounces of rice flour, two ounces of good chocolate, half an ounce of gelatine, and some essence of vanilla had been used, and the whole piled rockily in a glass dish just as it was beginning to set.

A *Chartreuse of Pineapple* was made from one of the delicious tinned pines now so easily obtainable, the fruit being cut up and simmered awhile in the syrup, with just enough gelatine to set it, a little being poured on a plate by way of test. This was poured into a "border mould," and turned out when set, the hollow space in the centre being filled up with whipped cream. No other sweets were provided, save fruit compôtes with custard, and a junket.

The day was an enjoyable one; and in the evening the three girls regretfully discussed the parting which was imminent, although Beatrice was rejoicing in the prospect of paying a return visit to the home of Myra and Frances, who suggested that she should come at Christmas and assist them in preparing for one or two little festivities in which they hoped to indulge. Beatrice gladly assented, as she was quite willing to combine pleasure with profit for the second time.