

Cassgrave I have no doubt, but whether he did it or not is another question. I cannot help regretting the destruction of Delaney's letters. They might have thrown a lurid light on a foul conspiracy. Nobody can blame Boyd for acting as he did under the circumstances, but I am convinced the simple-minded fellow was deceived. After reading Stanley Reed's communication, I set the police to work in Melbourne, in the hope that Molloy might be found. But they were too late; he had gone away to America, it was thought.

Time may show, or perhaps these mysteries must be left to the all-revealing eternity.

This one thing I will say: a nobler-hearted man

than Captain Cassgrave it was never my fortune to know; and I had no suspicion that in the thoughtlessness of youth he had banded himself with men who, in their lawlessness, have no scruples or compunction. The shadow of that early indiscretion fell across his years, and I am afraid it darkened his closing hours.

There is truth in what Myrtlewood said the last time I saw him. He was not referring to this subject, I may remark, but there is truth in his words. He said—

"Fools may tie a knot with their tongues which they cannot untie with their teeth."

THE END.

SAVOURY DISHES FOR SPRING.



HERE are few people who have not experienced the desire for change in diet as soon as balmy spring appears; indeed, there is no time of the year, perhaps, when the appetite is more capricious, especially of those who, if not actually ill, may be classed as "not of the strongest"; and as, in many cases, there is partial (and sometimes total) disinclination for animal food, I will in the following hints, depending mainly on fish, eggs, and the various products of the vegetable world, detail some cheap and easy dishes suitable for this season. First, to turn to fish: any of the white varieties, as soles, plaice, whiting, turbot, flounders, &c., are suitable for use in carrying out the following recipes, and in each case a tasty *plat* may be had at little expense.

For *Fricassée of Fish* the washing process must be quickly performed, in order to retain the flavour, and be followed by careful drying and trimming, and the division of the fish into convenient pieces for serving. To each pound half a pint of hot water should be added, with a few white peppercorns, a bunch of herbs, a tiny bit of mace, and a little salt. After stewing until the flesh looks white at the bone, the fish should be dished in a circle or pyramid, and kept hot while the sauce is prepared, simply by straining the liquor and thickening it with an ounce each of corn-flour and butter (the corn-flour to be smoothly mixed with cold milk), allowing it to boil up well, then adding, off the fire, the yolk of one egg, beating hard for several minutes; lemon-juice or vinegar, or essence of anchovies or shrimps, may be added to flavour. The stewpan should be set near the fire for a minute—on no account must it boil again—until the sauce is hot, when it should be poured over the fish. Not the least recommendation of a dish of this sort is that the nutriment of the fish is retained to the full, while, unfortunately, when fish is served plainly boiled much is lost in the water. This is a fitting opportunity to call attention

to the superiority of steamed over boiled fish, especially when any is required for re-serving in some of its numerous appetising forms.

Apropos of fish réchauffés, I would recommend a particularly nice one in the form of a *pudding*, for which a round cake-tin is needed; it should be brushed well all over the inside with liquefied butter, afterwards coated with bread-crumbs and filled with alternate layers of the following, in the order given:—Mashed potatoes; any cooked fish, freed from skin and bone, and flaked; enough sauce to cover the fish; some boiled macaroni, cut into small pieces. The top layer should be potatoes, with the whole of which a raw egg must be well beaten. The proportions are: a pound of potatoes, a pound of fish, half a pint of sauce, and four ounces of macaroni. Bread-crumbs should be sprinkled over the top, and then moistened with a little butter, and the pudding baked in a good oven for half an hour or more, until well browned, when it will turn out and look as good as it will taste; a little sauce to be poured round it just before serving.

Here is a capital way of cooking a flat fish of any kind for a plain family dinner—a fish of three to four pounds in weight being recommended. First, after washing and drying, cut it down the centre on the white side, then raise the flesh from the bone, as if for fillets, but stopping when the fins are reached. Prepare a forcemeat as if for veal, using butter instead of suet, and a beaten egg to bind it—no milk. There should be at least a generous teacupful of the forcemeat. Spread it on the under-side of the raised flesh, then press it down to the bone again, and brush the top with milk or a beaten egg; dredge it with bread-crumbs and bake in a tin, basting with a little hot fat (just as if cooking a joint of meat), in a moderate oven for thirty or forty minutes, according to the thickness of the fish. The surface should be well browned, and some sauce sent separately to table or poured round the fish. One made as follows can be depended upon as very appetising, though some may prefer a white

sauce :—Blend two ounces each of butter and flour in a stewpan, add a pint of stock from bones, if available, or made from a morsel of fresh meat ; failing that, use a dash of extract of meat ; add salt to taste, a tablespoonful of finely chopped capers, with twice that measure of their vinegar, and boil for five minutes.

A word now on the kinds of fish usually classed as "oily"; such are, undoubtedly, more satisfying, and, where they can be digested, more nourishing than white fish. All require care in the cooking, and it is well to choose those modes which detract from rather than add to their rich properties; thus for mackerel there are few better ways than to remove the backbones, and coat the fish with a mixture of bread-crumbs, parsley, thyme, salt, cayenne pepper, and a grate of nutmeg, laying two mackerel together sandwich fashion, previous to baking in a tin, without any fat save enough to just smear the bottom of the tin, and a sheet of white paper with which to cover the fish. It will be noted that this stuffing is dry—no fat, and no egg—for the simple reason that neither is needed, the fish itself being so rich. A *sauce piquante* may be served with them, or *gooseberry sauce*, with a small quantity of brown gravy added, is very delicious; so is a brown sauce containing some tomato conserve.

Curries of fish are not only generally enjoyable, but the dish, if oily fish forms the foundation, may be rendered very wholesome—that is to say, a curry, or rather the ingredients which go to form the combination, will nullify its richness, particularly if the curry paste or powder be of the best quality, and a good proportion of fruit and vegetables assists in its concoction. For instance, rhubarb or gooseberries should form the basis of the sauce, an onion being added, as for meat curries, and simmered for a while in a little hot butter, the curry paste or powder being added next, with enough fish stock to bring it to the required consistency. For *white fish*, cream, if only a small quantity, is a desideratum, just as for *oily fish* brown stock or gravy is preferable. The flavourings for curries are innumerable, but in all cases lemon-juice or vinegar must not be omitted, either being added off the fire when cream enters into the composition of the curry. The fish, if previously cooked, must be flaked only, and put into the sauce just long enough to become thoroughly heated. Fresh fish, naturally, makes the better curry; it should be divided into pieces just large enough to eat without further division. Eggs boiled hard, then sliced or quartered, form a suitable garnish, and boiled rice should be handed with the curry.

Tarragon is a suitable addition to all fish curries, but it must be very cautiously used; essence of tarragon is now sold in bottles, a few drops of which will flavour a curry, fish sauce, or salad to perfection.

How seldom in England, except in the homes of the well-to-do, is a dish of rice seen at table in any other form than plainly boiled! Yet recipes are numerous; sometimes the rice is cooked in water until half done, then put into stock or milk and boiled until it has absorbed it, and every grain is swollen and soft; then the condiments *ad lib.* may be added, as chutnee,

sweet pickles, raisins, &c. One very nice combination is an ounce or so of sultana raisins, a teaspoonful of curry paste and chopped pickles, or apple chutnee, and an ounce of grated Parmesan cheese, with half a pound of rice boiled in stock. After the added ingredients have simmered for a short time the mixture should be piled on a hot dish, and served at once.

Few dishes of this class, however, can excel that known as *Risotto*, made by boiling rice, piling it up on a dish, and seasoning it with salt and pepper, then covering it with a tomato *purée*, for which preserved tomatoes answer very well if carefully freed from skin. The best way is to simmer them for a short time, then rub them through a hair sieve. Finally, some grated cheese is sprinkled all over, all Parmesan being used, or a mixture of that with some other kind; any English cheese will do if dry enough to grate. The heat of the tomato *purée* will liquefy the cheese, though, in my opinion, it is preferable, and more digestible, dissolved first in a small quantity of milk until it resembles thick custard. When macaroni or other Italian pastes are employed instead of rice for this, the dish becomes *spaghetti*.

One hesitates to mention cream in a paper on cheap cookery, and yet relatively the dish for which it is intended need not be extravagant; indeed, it will probably cost less than the hot joint, which at this season some such dainty as a *mayonnaise of lobster* or *salmon* might with advantage supplant. A tin of either of the just-named fish will answer as well as fresh, and with a good supply of lettuces and half a pint of dressing, consisting of two yolks of eggs, a gill each of cream and salad oil, with a little French vinegar, and the usual seasonings, a real dainty is obtainable at comparatively small cost. A cheaper dressing is obtained by using a floury potato as a basis instead of eggs. Another nice salad is to be had from cold meat—say veal—the bones of which should be boiled down for stock, which is strained and left until it begins to set; it can then be whipped up lightly with an equal quantity of mayonnaise or other dressing, or placed about the salad in little heaps, the sauce to be poured over as usual. By using the stock in this way economy is practised, and extra flavour imparted. In summer time, in carrying out the same method, it is advisable to add a little dissolved gelatine to the bone stock.

I give, in conclusion, with full confidence that it will be appreciated, a *Gâteau de Lobster*. It should be eaten while hot, but is eatable when cold. Pour a small tumblerful of hot milk over the same measure of bread-crumbs, cover until cold, then stir in a tablespoonful of fried parsley mixed with a grate of nutmeg, a saltspoonful of pepper, and a teaspoonful of salt; add two eggs and mix well; mince a lobster (tinned will answer), add it to the rest, then put the mixture into a mould, well buttered, and coated with bread-crumbs. Shake more crumbs on the top, and add a few small pieces of butter. Bake in a rather quick oven twenty to forty minutes, according to depth of tin. It should feel firm, and turn out easily. If there is any coral in the tin of lobster, reserve it for sprinkling over the *gâteau* the last thing. L. HERITAGE.