

last evening when he was reciting his new love poem to me. It was very touching, I remember."

"Belle, for pity's sake don't laugh!" cried Mark, seizing the girl's hands. "Can't you guess what it means to me? Tell me, dear—I know you were little more than a child when you went away, and I won't ask you to remember any words you would like to forget—but tell me, my dear, do you love me still?"

She did not tell him, but he saw something in her eyes which made him free her hands that he might take her into his arms.

"Hark! What's that?" she cried in alarm.

"Nothing," said Mark, stoutly; and at that moment

he fully believed that outside Farmer Honeysett's dairy nothing could happen worth mentioning.

Belle had heard the creaking of the dairy door, and had she been listening more intently she might have heard the stealthy tread of Betty Briggs's feet retreating across the kitchen.

For the first and last time in her life the old servant had indulged in a moment's eavesdropping, and almost directly afterwards she appeared before her mistress with tearful eyes.

"Oh, ma'am!" she cried, "Mark Sherwood's in the dairy, an' Miss Belle's with him, an'—an' she aren't spoilt, an' we've got our own Miss Belle back after all."

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### SOME CURIOSITIES OF AUSTRIAN COOKERY.

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THAT Austria is a land of good living is freely owned. English housekeepers may glean many a hint from the national cuisine, for to the majority the dishes will come as novelties; but those who begrudge a little trouble should not approach them; for the first thing, perhaps, that strikes one is the care that is exercised in the pre-

paration of the homeliest materials. What dainty dishes emerge from the hands of an Austrian cook from a base of liver or a set of brains!—dishes that would put to the blush many an *entrée* of English origin. And the daintiness is the outcome of care rather than cost in many instances; for some of the most delicious morsels bear the stamp of economy. Then seasoning is an art in Austria; and although at first sight some of the mixtures of herbs and spices may seem strange, it is generally found that there is more than an ordinary amount of method in the supposed madness. Let those who vote veal insipid try a dish or two of veal as given below, and we promise them a revelation. And when one comes to such every-day commodities as spinach and potatoes, one realises indeed that judicious seasoning will work wonders. We will first run through a few soups, selecting those that will be the greatest novelties to the ordinary English reader.

*Liver Soup* is first-rate, and so simple; but to have it in perfection it must be made from finely-chopped liver. While the chopping process is going on, after the liver has been duly cleaned and any blemish removed, a good assortment of vegetables should be yielding their savour to some butter melted in a stewpan over the fire. All the vegetables that go to make up a good soup of the ordinary kind are admissible here, and to them the liver is to be put, about an equal bulk, though there is much left to individual judgment. The mass is to go on cooking, and should be moistened from time to time with stock, and plenty of seasoning

in the shape of salt and pepper and herbs is wanted. When the whole is soft more stock goes in, and the soup is strained before serving. The liver is left behind. "Wasteful!" some will cry. Not a bit of it, for the liver has yielded all its goodness to the liquor; and, given plenty of time for the cooking, this would beat many a costly soup of meat or game. The stock in Austria is, as a rule, for all these brown soups, that from boiled beef, which is a standing dish of the country.

*White Soup*.—There are hosts of soups of the white class, and this one deserves special attention. It is got from a stock from any white meat that has been boiled with any of the well-known cereals, such as barley or tapioca, and they *do* boil these things long and well in Austria; this is made very savoury by the aid of seasoning, herbs playing a prominent part. The soup tureen is then heated, and some butter and raw eggs put in; the soup goes in, and is beaten with right good will, but does not so much as smell the fire again, so there is no fear of a curdly mess where velvety softness should reign supreme; this is handed round with chopped chives or spring onions. Simple enough to occur to anybody, but to how few do these little finishing touches occur! yet what a difference they make to the dish, and how trifling the cost! Such a soup, even with two eggs and an ounce of butter added to the pint, is within the reach of almost everybody, though this is richer than it need be for every-day consumption.

*Egg Soup* shows us that faults will creep in in the best-regulated *menus*; for here, clearly, someone has blundered. This is nothing more than a brown or white stock, thickened with eggs and flour, the latter being beaten together, added to the stock, and served *at once*—and here is the blunder. We venture to suggest that the flour be put in and cooked for a few minutes, that this be added to the eggs, already beaten, and strained, and then the sooner the soup is served the better. Raw flour *is* raw flour all the world over, and few people, we imagine, like it, or are likely



to acquire a taste for it. So far as we are aware, egg soups are much less known in England than they deserve to be. They are capable of endless variation, need not cost much, and would be found excellent as a change from meat for the substantial dish of a child's dinner.

*Soup Hasché* comes as a boon to those who are tired of the familiar methods of re-serving cold mutton—not that mutton is much used for it in Austria, that meat being neither very good nor plentiful there; but as any meat will do we mention mutton. There are no proportions; whatever is handy in the way of vegetables goes in, and full scope is afforded for the using up of "left overs." But there *must* be some onion, and this *must* be fried, and some of the vegetables should be green—anything from a scrap of cabbage to a *purée* of spinach—and those who have the run of a garden will do well to include the homely bunch of mustard and cress; watercress is also to be recommended. Rice furnishes the thickening, and this cereal is largely used and cooked in all sorts of savoury ways for serving with meat; therefore it goes without saying that this soup depends very much for its savour upon the rice, and that it will hardly ever be twice alike, owing to the variations of flavour; but raw rice is sometimes put in; then spices and herbs of many sorts are used. Finally, when these materials are ready—and the plainest of plain stocks will serve for the cooking—the cold meat is put in—just as much as can be afforded; not a particle of gristle should be visible, and the soup should not boil after the addition.

Sour cream greets us at all points, and before leaving the soups we may refer to one that is nothing more than water or plain stock, thickened with a mixture of sour cream and flour, and seasoned to taste. This is one of the most curious of all the dishes, and we must confess that we do not much appreciate it.

But one dish in which sour cream is, perhaps, at its best we must not forget to mention, and that is *Feld Braten*. This is very simple. Enough cream is put in a saucepan with a good seasoning of onion and parsley—say a pint for three or four pounds of beef; the latter is beaten and tied into a compact shape and put in, then cooked for two to three hours, or longer; the cream should half cover it, the meat should be turned as required, and the cooking *must* be slow. The cream is the only sauce served with this. Another way of cooking beef, which finds favour with almost everybody, is a savoury roast. The meat is put in a baking-tin with carrots and turnips and other vegetables and some fat, then cooked, and the gravy, after freeing it from the fat, is mixed with some of the red wine of the country. An alternative for this can be had by mixing a little vinegar with the gravy, and the vegetables in the pan will come in for a soup. This reminds us that carrots are employed for larding meat; for example, some bacon in thick strips and pieces of carrot are inserted alternately, and very savoury is the dish. We are all pretty familiar with boiled salted tongue, but not many of us make a fresh tongue, as a roast, a standing dish at our tables; but it is a common one in Austria, and very good. The thing is to boil it first steadily until

tender, then to lard it with bacon and anchovies, and bake it, with cream to cover, until it is hot through. Some golden-brown bread-crumbs give the finishing touch to the dish, and the cream in the pan is the only adjunct in the shape of sauce. The liquor from the tongue and its skin are utilised for soup. A passing word of commendation is due to the dishes of *larded liver* that are so common in Austria. There is good reason for serving liver with fatty food of some sort, and the combination reaches its highest development in liver that has been soaked for a while in milk, then larded with good bacon after slicing; it is then covered with thinly-sliced onions and fried slowly, and very excellent it is, with perhaps, an accompaniment of crisp potatoes or a *purée* of spinach. The latter is a common adjunct to veal dishes.

*Veal Birds* are made in Austria from slices of raw veal, covered with thin slices of bacon and a sage-leaf, then tied up and roasted. There is, however, no reason why they should not be stewed. Here is the result of our own experiment. A foundation gravy was made from a recipe for another dish of veal that is popular in Austria; it is composed of a mixture of white stock and cream, and flavoured with lemon peel, parsley, cayenne, and a dash each of salt and nutmeg. The "birds" were stewed in this for about two hours; they are nicest when made small enough to serve one to each person. This same gravy is an admirable base for cold veal in the form of a mince or a hash.

*Brains à la Friture*.—This is a most delightful dish. Again the savour is due to onions. Some calf's brains are washed with a scrupulous nicety that would be voted unnecessary by many; they are then boiled, and beaten up with crumb of bread that has been soaked in milk or stock, and squeezed. We recommend an innovation in the matter of preparing the bread, and that is to sieve it. The finishing off is left to the discretion of the cook, and she who is an adept in the seasoning art will earn the most applause. From experience, we think it is not easy to improve upon a dash of thyme and parsley, salt and cayenne, with a suspicion of lemon juice, and, if liked, a little grated cheese. Although the brains *par excellence* are those of the calf, others may be used. Finally, insert this mixture between pieces of bread cut as for sandwiches, and these may be shaped to suit the taste; the more fanciful, the prettier the dish. Press together, and fry a golden brown in really hot fat; semi-heated fat will ruin them. From the fire to the table should be here the work of an instant.

Everybody can cook potatoes, it is often asserted, but not with a vast amount of truth, even when the plainest modes are in question; and how many serve them in dainty forms in this country? Here is a dish worth the trial; it goes with anything in the way of meat or fish, and it may be served as a separate course—only our old friend *potato balls*, but how transformed! Don't try these unless you possess a sieve; and would you eat them in perfection cook the tubers in their jackets, but this is optional. Supposing a pound of ready-cooked and carefully-sieved potatoes;



beat up the yolks of two eggs with an ounce of melted butter, and stir in, with cayenne and salt and a salt-spoonful, or thereabouts, of finely chopped or grated lemon peel; then put to it a tablespoonful of onion that has been chopped as finely as parsley, and fried the palest of pale browns. When cold this is made up into balls, and coated with the familiar crust of white of egg and bread-crumbs, and fried a dainty brown. There *are* people who *think* they do not like onions; others *know* they do not: the doubtful ones might learn a lesson by trying them when combined with lemon, as in this recipe. When fried onions are not convenient, the best substitute is found in a morsel of the vegetable scalded in nice stock; do not use in the raw state for fastidious folk.

We hear a good deal in these days of scientific cookery, of the folly of wasting salts of vegetables by boiling, and pouring the water, in the majority of cases, down the sink. The Austrian method of stewing cabbages affords an illustration of a dish that has but to be tried to become popular, and which retains to the full all the salts the cabbage contains. But we *do* advise the preliminary scalding of the cabbage, or it would be too strong for a palate unused to so concentrated a flavour. More onions!—they are the making

of the dish. Enough to fill a pint measure would be allowed for a couple of medium cabbages; and, after frying the onions brown in butter, the cabbages are cut into finger lengths and put in with stock to cover, and simmered for a couple of hours. People who throw their cauliflower stems away, and who consign the outer leaves of lettuces to the dust-heap, may remember this recipe with advantage to themselves the next time they are tempted to commit follies of that description.

There are hosts of dishes we might give if space permitted, but we can only find room for a sauce that commends itself on the grounds of novelty and economy. It is good with cold fish, or in small quantities as an adjunct to salad, or it can be served with brawn and all else of a gelatinous nature, that generally palls by reason of insipidity. The foundation is got from the yolks of hard-boiled eggs, and about an equal number of anchovies is wanted. They should be pounded together, and the sauce thinned to the consistence of cream with vinegar and cold stock; the latter must be of a kind suited to the dish, and the proportions of each are easily regulated to suit the taste. Minced parsley is sometimes put in, and the least dash of onion juice may be used for extra savour.

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## DAVENANT.

By S. SOUTHALL BONE, Author of "The Manager of Manston Mills."

### CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

#### THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE SPIDER AND THE FLIES.



HERE was a hard day's work before Mr. Jonas Hawkey; for the half-yearly meeting of the United Cheshire Cheesemaking Company, Limited, was to take place, and its affairs had rather an ugly look: for the absconding secretary had not been replaced; and, what was worse, neither had been the money. The two fish on his line had not been

landed. Mrs. Martha Baggs had developed an uncomfortable amount of business knowledge and tact in her further correspondence with him; and his nervous friend had not yet parted with his money. Bold

as Hawkey was, he acknowledged to himself that he had never faced a meeting in more awkward circumstances.

His thoughts were not of the pleasantest kind as he walked through the City to the United Cheshire Cheesemaking office, which was in a small court leading out of King William Street. He had to face a number of clamorous, angry men, whose mouths only money would stop, and of money he had, just then, none to give. Nevertheless, he had fought through many similar battles, and had come out conqueror, and there was no reason why he should not do so on this occasion. And if the worst came to the worst: why, then there was that sure Bethesda of a private composition (it was in the days before Mr. Chamberlain's Bankruptcy Act) into which he could go, and come out clean, none the worse, and scarcely any the poorer, for the renovating process.

As he mounted the stairs leading to the Company's offices the first drops of the coming storm fell upon his head. A group of shareholders, angry and disappointed, blocked the head of the stairs, and hung about the entrance to the room.

"Here's Mr. Hawkey," said one. "I hope as how he's got better news for us than we had last time."

"News or no news," said another, "I'll have my money out, or I'll know the reason why."

"So you shall, my friend," said Hawkey coolly, to