

dusty road, amid cries of fright and anger. Faith hastened to pick up the infant, and the little girl, carefully putting down her can, pursued the pudding basin into the ditch, exclaiming in a terrified tone, "Oh, pray! what be I to do?"

"Never mind, my dear," said Faith, kindly; "the dinner is none the worse, and the baby is only frightened."

As she spoke a young gentleman came cantering along the turf. The little girl curtsied to him, and as he passed he reined in his horse, and in a good-natured tone asked what was the matter. "Upset your appetite, I see, Lizzie Forster," he continued, answering his own question. "There, don't cry about it. Wheel come off, is it? Blacksmith will mend it for you. There"—throwing her a shilling—"go and get it done, and mother won't scold." Lizzie curtsied again and again as she picked up the coin, and wiped her eyes cheerfully on her pinafore. "You have a friend here, I see," continued the young gentleman, looking at Faith, who stood holding the baby in her arms, "who can help you better than I can." So saying, he raised his hat to Faith and rode off.

"Who is it?" inquired the young school-mistress, when the baby was quieted, and Lizzie, having explained she was going to the nine acre field with the dinners, had promised to show the way thither.

"Mr. William Terrick, our young master. He's a very kind gentleman. He lives along of his father in that big house with the trees round it. Can you carry baby, Miss? A'n't he too heavy for you? He is a lump."

"I think my arms are as strong as yours," said Faith. "What shall we do with the perambulator?"

"Set it upside down in the ditch," said Lizzy, promptly. "Nobody will meddle with it. I don't so much mind telling mother 'tis broke, now I've got that shilling. Master Ward will put the wheel on again for less than that, I think."

The baby was very heavy, and Faith's arms soon ached with his weight; but Lizzie amused her by chattering freely about her brothers and sisters; and when she heard that her new friend was to be her future teacher, she brightened up, and said she knew she should like to come to school to her.

"There's Bert East," volunteered the child, as they entered the cornfield, "and there's mother coming to meet me. She'll scold 'cause I'm late."

Faith did not wait to hear Lizzy's explanations of her adventure, but giving the baby into its mother's arms, went up to the young pupil-teacher. He was a tall, slight young fellow, bronzed and freckled by the sun, and looking very picturesque in his white shirt and red tennis hat.

"I am sorry to interrupt your work," she said, politely, "but I am Miss Francis, the new mistress, and as I am going to take Mr. Hawes's class at Sunday-school to-morrow, I want to ask you something about the lessons."

Albert East gave the required information, and when she had learnt all she wanted to know, he raised his hat to her and returned to his work.

The cornfield was a pleasant sight. Being only a small one, the work was being all done by hand, and a very pretty picture the reapers made. Men and women in their different dresses, the large hats of the girls crowning the slender figures, which often took attitudes of unconscious grace, amid the shocks and sheaves of golden corn.

"How I wish I could draw them!" thought Faith, and then she came to the prettiest picture of all. There lay the fat, chubby baby she had carried, fast asleep on a wheat-sheaf, other shocks being built over him like a cradle to shield him from the sun. The rest of his family—Mrs. Forster and her husband, and a big boy—were all at work cutting the wheat; while Lizzie and an older girl were on their knees making bands for the sheaves. The mother raised her head to nod her thanks to Faith as she passed for carrying the baby; while from Lizzie, Faith got a smile and a curtsy.

(To be continued.)

THE CHEESE COURSE.

By PHILLIS BROWNE, Author of "The Girl's Own Cookery Book."



IN these degenerate days cheese is not considered the indispensable requisite for a dinner which it used to be, although there are still a good many people who would not consider they had dined properly if they were not permitted to conclude the meal with a small piece of well kept Stilton, or a slice of Cheshire cheese. Fortunately we live in a free country, and people are allowed to do as they like in matters of diet, so that cheese has never been entirely banished from the best tables. This is to a certain extent a good thing, for those who have studied foods from a scientific standpoint tell us that, though when taken by itself cheese is difficult to digest, yet when taken after other food it seems to facilitate digestion, because it starts a change in the food. It is very nutritious too, and hard-working people who labour in the open air from day to day would find it more profitable to buy cheese than meat, because cheese contains nearly twice the quantity of nutritive matter that we get from cooked meat. People who live indoors, however, and do not take a large amount of outdoor exercise, would most likely become unwell if they took cheese in large quantities, and therefore they would be wise to regard it as an adjunct to food rather than as a regular article of diet.

Cheese has been used by mankind from very early times. It is mentioned in Homer's "Iliad," "The fig's pressed juice, infused in cream, to curds conglutates the finest cream." Reference is made to it also, I have been told, in the works of Aristotle, Euripides, and Theocritus. The Hebrews knew of it 3,000 years ago, for in the First Book of Samuel xvii. 18 we read that David was told

by his father Jesse to carry ten cheeses to the captain of his brethren. Josephus, too, tells us that a valley in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem was called the valley of the cheese-mongers. In our own country cheese has been known for centuries. In Fuller's "Worthies," we read "Poor men eat cheese for hunger, rich for digestion. It seems that the ancient British had no skill in the making thereof till taught by the Romans, and now the Romans may even learn of us more exactness therein." Dr. Thomas Fuller, who wrote the "History of the Worthies of England," from which these words are taken, died in 1661. So it would appear that even at this early period the nutritive value of cheese was fully appreciated.

As everyone knows, cheese is simply the curd of milk pressed into solid masses of varying size and weight, and usually either salted, dried, coloured, or flavoured. Its quality depends upon the kind of milk used, and the mode of preparation adopted. The milk of cows is generally chosen, though occasionally ewes' milk and also goats' milk are employed, and in the Arabian deserts it is made from the milk of camels and mares. Of modern nations we English appear to have the highest appreciation of it, for not only do we consume large quantities made at home, but we import large quantities from abroad, and especially from America. At the present time foreign cheeses, known as fancy cheeses, are largely used by the upper classes, and some of them are very delicious. Roquefort is one of the best known. It is a French cheese, and is made from sheep's and goats' milk. In taste it resembles Stilton cheese. Its quality is said to depend entirely upon the place in which it is kept whilst it is ripening. Baron Liebig says that these cheeses are kept in cellars communicating with mountain grottoes or caverns, which are kept constantly cool by currents of air from clefts in the mountains. The value of these cellars as store-

houses varies with their coolness. There was one cellar which cost originally only £480, and which was sold for £8,600, because it was to be uniformly of the right temperature. Parmesan is another celebrated cheese; it keeps very well, and is much used in cookery, as is also Gruyere, a solid dry cheese with a very strong flavour. Camembert and Gorgonzola, too, are very favourite cheeses. Cream cheese is also deservedly popular.

Nowadays it is not at all unusual to serve one or two varieties of cheese at the same time, cutting these up into small pieces of a size suitable for serving, and then handing the dish round that each guest may help himself. Butter made up into small neat shapes with Scotch hands, and garnished with parsley, biscuits, or pulled bread, watercress, salad, or celery, should always be supplied as accompaniments. If the cheese is well chosen, and a little pains is given to its arrangement, the cheese course may be made quite a noticeable conclusion to the meal. There are now to be bought cheese dishes with two or three compartments for the reception of the various details, and these are very convenient for handing the biscuits, butter, and watercress with the cheese. The Scotch hands, as I suppose most people know, are long flat pieces of wood fluted inside, and used for rolling the butter into small shapes. They should be soaked in cold water some time before being used.

Pulled Bread is made by taking a new loaf, one which is underbaked if it can be obtained, pulling it apart into rather small pieces, and putting these in a shallow pan in a slow oven till they are crisp and brown.

It is not, however, of the ordinary way of serving cheese that I wish specially to speak now, but rather to give recipes and describe the mode of preparation of certain favourite delicacies into the composition of which cheese enters and is the principal ingredient. Excellent as cheese is when it is well chosen

and well served, it does not suffice for everyone. There are people who like variety occasionally, and they prefer to have cheese cooked in different ways, and they manage to convert it into very toothsome morsels.

The most celebrated of the cheese dishes is what is called a fondu, or cheese soufflée. Some time ago I gave in THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER a recipe for this dish, so I need not repeat the details. I may perhaps be allowed to say that I hope that if the girls who tried to make this dish were not at once successful, they will not be discouraged, but that they will try again. All soufflés are difficult to make. The girl who managed one properly the first time she made the attempt would be a very talented person, with a real genius for cookery, I should say. The trying part of a soufflée is that it spoils so quickly. If you do not take exactly the correct proportion of the ingredients, if you do not cook the panada very thoroughly, if you do not whip the egg whites very stiffly, if you put them in too early, if you do not mix them in perfectly, or if you mix them in too vigorously, if the oven is not hot enough, or if you get too anxious and take a peep too soon, to see how the fondu is getting on; if you slam the oven-door, after looking in, instead of shutting it gently, and so let in a current of cold air; if you leave the fondu in the oven a little too long, or do not serve it as quickly as possible after it is taken out—all these accidents, any one of which may very easily happen, will be likely to spoil the fondu. Therefore, girls should undertake the work at a time when they can give their whole attention to the business, and they should make up their minds to try, try, try again till they succeed.

Cheese Straws are very delicious little trifles, and are just the things to nibble at the close of dinner. Some cooks have an idea that all you need to do in making them is to mix a little grated cheese with ordinary pastry and then cut the preparation into strips and bake them; but this is a very feeble imitation of the real article, which should be made as follows:—Take two ounces of Vienna flour. (Vienna flour, it will be understood, is the finest flour used for superior pastry. It is dearer than ordinary household flour, and has been passed through silk sieves; but it is very white, and makes very light pastry. I believe it is so very fine that there is not much nourishment left in it; but then people do not take cheese straws for nourishment, but enjoyment, or, rather, they have got as much nourishment as they require before the cheese straws are brought on.) Put the Vienna flour upon a board and mix in a little pepper and salt and a very little cayenne. (Cayenne enters into all cheese dishes.) Rub in two ounces of butter, as if you were going to make short paste, and when the butter and flour are like fine oatmeal add two ounces of grated Parmesan, or, if this is not to be had, grated cheese of some dry, strong sort. Parmesan is, however, really the cheese which answers best for purposes of this kind, because its flavour is so pronounced, and it is so dry. A soft cheese could not be grated properly—it would stick together, but a dry cheese grates quite easily. Work the mixture to a smooth paste with the yolk of an egg; unless the egg is a good-sized one, it is quite possible that there will not be enough moisture to make up the paste. In this case part of

another yolk must be taken, and a few drops of lemon juice are even permissible, but water is not allowed—it will destroy the characteristic crispness of the pastry. Knead the paste till it is smooth and stiff, and roll it out five inches wide and one-eighth of an inch thick. Dip a sharp knife in flour and cut the pastry into strips a quarter of an inch wide; take them up on the point of a knife and put them on a greased baking sheet; roll out the scraps of pastry and stamp it out in rings with a round pastry cutter. Lay these also on the baking-sheet and bake in a cool oven till the straws are a pale brown colour. For serving, put a few straws in each ring and serve on a napkin.

Cheese d'Artois.—Scraps of puff paste, or of any good light crust, may be used for this purpose. Put an ounce of butter into a basin and beat it with a spoon till it looks like cream. Add two yolks of eggs and one white, two ounces of grated cheese, a little pepper, salt, and cayenne; roll out the pastry very thinly and divide it into two equal parts; lay one of these on a greased baking-sheet, spread the cheese mixture upon it, and cover with the other piece. Mark with the back of a knife at suitable distances, to show where it is to be divided when it is baked, and bake in a quick oven for about ten minutes. Serve on a dish covered with a folded napkin.

Aigrettes of Parmesan.—Take two ounces of fine bread-crumbs. Pour on half a pint of cold milk and soak the bread, then add one ounce of butter, two yolks of eggs, two ounces of grated Parmesan, half a gill of cream, and a little salt and cayenne. Last of all add the whites of the eggs, which have been whipped to a firm froth. Let the mixture get cold, then form it into small heaps, each one about the size of a marble. Make some fat hot in a saucepan, egg and bread the *aigrettes*, put them in a frying basket and fry them to a pale brown colour. Have ready cut some strips of cheese to stick into them, and garnish with fried parsley.

Cheese Cronstades.—Cut away the crust from some slices of bread an inch and a half thick, taken from a square-shaped, stale, crummy loaf. With a plain round cutter, an inch and a half in diameter, stamp out ten or a dozen circular pieces, and with a smaller cutter make an incision at one end of each piece to within a quarter of an inch of the edge. Make some fat hot in a stewpan, fry the bread to a light brown, and drain it on kitchen fat. After frying, remove the incised disc and the crumb from the interior and put the cronstades in the oven to keep hot. Put an ounce of butter and a dessert-spoonful of water into a small saucepan. Set this on the fire, and when the water boils stir in browned bread-crumbs to make a stiff paste, then add the well-beaten yolk of an egg, a little pepper, salt, and cayenne, and a small teaspoonful of grated Parmesan. Fill the cronstades with the mixture, put fried parsley on the top, and serve quite hot.

Cheese Patés.—Line some patty pans with good pastry which has been rolled out very thin. Grate two ounces of Parmesan and put it into a basin with one ounce of warmed butter, two yolks of eggs, and one white (if the eggs are small use three), and a little salt and cayenne. Fill the patties with the mixture and bake in a moderately heated oven till it is set and the pastry is slightly coloured.

Sprinkle a little grated cheese on the top and serve hot.

Cheese Canapées.—Cut some thin slices of stale bread. Stamp these out with a plain tin cutter of round or oval shape and fry them till they are lightly browned. Let them drain on kitchen paper, and put on each one a little grated Parmesan which has been mixed with mustard and pepper. Set them in a brisk oven or before a clear fire, and serve very hot as soon as the cheese is dissolved.

Ramakins.—Melt an ounce of butter in a small stewpan over the fire and add a teaspoonful of mignonette pepper, which is simply white peppercorns coarsely bruised. After frying for a minute or two strain the butter into another stewpan away from the pepper, and beat into it an ounce of flour. Add a saltspoonful of salt and as much cayenne as would barely cover a threepenny-piece (or rather less, if hot things are not approved). Work in a gill of milk and keep stirring the panada till it boils and thickens. Mix in off the fire, and one at a time, the yolks of three eggs, and afterwards three ounces of grated Parmesan. Beat the whites of four eggs, stir them into the mixture without breaking down the froth, half fill some ramakin papers (that is, small paper cases which may be bought at the fancy stationer's and which cost about ninepence per dozen), and put these into a quick oven until the preparation is firm in the centre. Ten minutes will be about the time required. Serve immediately in the paper cases. If ramakin papers are not to be had, small tin moulds may be used instead, but the paper cases will look the prettier.

Crèmes de Fromage.—Scraps of puff pastry may be used for these delicate trifles. Roll the pastry out very thinly and cut it into rounds. Take a stewpan with two ounces of cream and two ounces of grated Parmesan. Mix and add salt and cayenne. Put a good depth of fat into a stewpan and set it on the fire to get hot; put a little of the mixture into each round of pastry, moisten the edges and turn the pastry over, pressing the edges to make them adhere. Egg the turnovers, roll them in bread-crumbs, and fry them in the hot fat. When lightly browned they are done. Drain them on kitchen paper, arrange them in a circle in a dish covered with a napkin, and garnish with fried parsley.

Among the homely, easily managed ways of cooking cheese may be mentioned cheese pudding and stewed cheese, or Welsh rabbit, with the recipes for which I will conclude.

Cheese Pudding.—Take equal quantities of grated cheese and fine bread-crumbs; mix thoroughly and pour on as much boiling milk as the preparation will absorb. Add beaten eggs, one egg for each half-pint of milk; put the mixture in a stewpan and stir it occasionally till the cheese is melted, then put it into a greased pie-dish and bake it till set. Serve immediately.

Stewed Cheese.—Cut some good Cheshire cheese into thin slices, put them into a stewpan and cover them with ale. Keep stirring till the cheese melts, then add a spoonful of mustard and one beaten egg for each quarter of a pound of cheese. Stir again for a minute over the fire, have ready some thin toasted sippets cut into triangular pieces. Put the cheese into a hot dish, stick the toasted sippets into it here and there, and serve very hot.

