she spoke the last words with difficulty, for it was not as easy to her as it was to Winifred to speak of these things, "and when you come to think of spending money on dress at all—more than is necessary I mean, does it not seem wrong?"

"I know quite what you feel, May. I felt just as you do. But mother set me right about it. It was when I first had an allowance for my dress, I heard about a church that was very much needed in a neglected part of the East End, and I wanted so much to help it. And I felt quite wicked when I went to a dressmaker and ordered a bridesmaid's dress for Amy Dixon's wedding. Mother found me crying—she did indeed."

"Winifred—it is a comfort to hear you say that," said May; "well, what did Mrs. Lyle say?"

"I told her all I felt, and then she explained to me that our station in life is all divinely ordered, and that as that sonnet of Archbishop Trench's says, we did 'not come to our place by accident, it is the very place God meant' for us. So that if we dressed according to our means we were only using the money given us rightly. Mother said that it was necessary to do so."

"But, Winifred, when you say dress according to your station, why, one could not always do it. For instance, you know of course that Uncle John and mother were very rich indeed in their youth. My grandfather was a very large landowner in Ireland, and their estates were enormous. But he speculated and sold his land, and so his children had hardly any money at his death, and Uncle John has always had to work for his living. It would be absurd for me, in our little house, to dress as mother had every right to do when she was a girl in Ireland, living in their large castle and going to Dublin every year for the season."

"Yes, May, but mother said means—not only station. I understand what you mean quite well, and that she explained to me. Well, about my bridesmaid's dress. Mother said that we owed a duty to our families, if we were not living all alone, and that to get a nice dress for the wedding was quite right. It would have been wrong if I had spent too much money on it, or gone into debt—mother has a horror of that—but what I bought was not expensive, and she said it was just the thing. I remember mother saying, 'If you were a duchess, Winifred, or a very rich woman, it would be just as suitable if you had gone to a very grand dressmaker in Regent Street and paid ten times the amount. It would have been in accordance then with the larger means.'"

"I see. But about the church you wanted to help."

"Well, mother always taught us, even when we were tiny children with our pocket-money, to give a tenth to the church or poor, and we have done that. And then she showed me how, by economising in my winter dress, I could save enough to give even a little more."

"But don't some people give up all attempt at dressing well, and give away what they save?"

"Yes, but mother thinks when a girl is living with her own family, that it is wiser to dress like other people, but if she leaves home to become a sister or to work among the poor that is another matter altogether. Boys particularly, you see, get good by companionship with their sisters, and they naturally like a girl who is not conspicuously dowdy or badly dressed."

"Now, Winifred, I think I must go. Shall we make up some parcels of the things that are ready?"

"Yes. There is some brown paper there, if you will take it out; I am sure Miss Long will be pleased to have that bundle."

"Yes, she has such a large district. I see you have had all those things washed."

"Yes, I don't like sending soiled things away," said Winifred; "those boots can go in too, May, if you can spare them; I gave the Grays and Nellie Hardman some of mine lately, so they do not want them."

"Should I have had them mended before giving them away?" asked May.

"No, I never do," said Winifred. "The poor can get that done very cheaply themselves, as they know cobblers who will do them for a few pence, and it is never worth while our doing it."

"Next time I come, Winifred, I want to ask you to show me several things about needlework, will you?"

"With pleasure," said Winifred, "if it's anything I know."

(To be continued.)

ON THE MAKING OF PORRIDGES.

By DORA DE BLAQUIÈRE.

An article on porridges must of necessity begin with the special porridge dear to Scottish folk all over the world, which is made of oatmeal. But there are several other kinds of porridges equally good, and in some cases more useful, though none should be used in any family dietary for longer than a week or so at a time, as people are likely to get tired of it, and to give up a habit which is healthful and pleasant.

A recent vegetarian recipe-book gives a list of five porridges—oatmeal, wheatmeal, sago, lentil, and wheatmeal and oat milk porridges; indeed, all of these mixtures may be ranged under two headings, viz., those made of water, and those of milk. The latter requires very careful making, and is in high favour with most people (not only invalids and nurses of the sick) as a species of temperance nightcap taken the last thing before going to bed. For everyone in a weak state of health and for convalescents they are invaluable, and often seem to calm and soothe the whole system and induce a quiet sleep. I have found wheatmeal almost better for this purpose than oatmeal, sago, or arrowroot.

The plainest and simplest way to make porridge is the one generally in use in Scotland, viz., to use the water boiling. While boiling put in a pinch of salt, then begin to sprinkle in the oatmeal gradually with one hand while you stir with the other, keeping the water boiling all the time. Boil the mixture for half an hour, stirring occasionally. An experienced cook seldom measures, but for the benefit of the inexperienced it is best to say that a quart of water will require about two breakfast-cups of oatmeal.

Porridge is stirred when made on its native heather "wi a parritch stick," so I have been told, which is made of wood an inch or more wide at the bottom, or something like a small oar. But a wooden spoon will answer as well, and is more easily attainable, and should always be kept for the purpose as well as the saucepan. An Irish cook, who was a wonderfully good porridge-maker, preferred an ordinary iron pot which, she declared, never burnt at the bottom unless the cook were extremely careless. The greatest care is needed to start your porridge-making with a steady, good fire, keeping the water at the boil the whole time, and the oatmeal should be steadily stirred in as it falls, or it will form into lumps as it reaches the surface. Fine meal will require more water than the coarse, but the latter needs the most boiling. A great authority on the "Chemistry of Cookery" thinks that the porridge is the best when it is made a day or two before wanted, or when sufficient is made for several days, and then warmed-up as it is required for breakfast. Certain changes, I believe, take place in the gluten of the meal which make it more nutritive and digestible. This plan, if adopted during the winter months when the mornings are so short, would certainly be a great saving of trouble to the cook.

An American way of making porridge is to steep the meal in as much cold water as it will absorb, allowing it to remain for several hours or all night, then to stir it into the boiling water and continue to stir till the mixture boil fast and shall thicken. Then to remove it to a place where it will keep boiling steadily for about twenty minutes. Double saucepans are, perhaps, the safest things in which to make porridge, as there is no possibility of its burning. The outside pan contains the boiling water, while the boiling water to make the porridge is contained in the inner pan. The same kind of pot is used for boiling milk.

The Scotsman, on his native heather, would probably not use the word "porridge," but quite another one. "Brose," is of Anglo-Saxon origin, and comes, like the word "broth" from the word "brodh," from the verb "breovan," to brew; and this is the term most frequently used in Scotland, where "brose" is applied to a dish made by pouring some boiling liquid (such as beef broth or water) on the meal of oats or peas, and stirring it up without boiling. It is called "beef brose," "kale brose," or "water brose," according to the liquid used. "Kale brose" is a compound of soup, oatmeal and green kale, and an ancient chronicle tells us that the first of the Scottish kings, Fergus, of warlike renown, was wont to eat it before going forth to win victories over his foes.

"Brose" of the simplest kind is only made of hot water, oatmeal, and a little salt, all stirred up in a basin; and this is the most usual way. But you must not imagine that we have yet exhausted the names of porridge; for the labourer partakes of a yet more simple dish, which is oatmeal merely stirred up in cold water, and eaten without boiling, or even the use of hot water to mix it. This dish is called "crowdy," and the labourer takes his allowance of meal and mixes it himself. I believe that crowdy is thought to be the earliest form in which oatmeal was consumed in Scotland; but in

the form of broses, the meal has been used there from the earliest days. Though it may have been eaten like the roasted wheaten-meal of the Canary Islands, without the admixture of water, a national custom which, I have no doubt, is distinctly traceable to those aboriginal inhabitants of those "Islands of the Blest," which are so interesting, and so mysterious.

Nor must we forget in our list what is called "sowens" in Scotland, or "flummery" in England, the name being derived from the Welsh word "llymru," meaning something crude or sour. This is made of oatmeal steeped in water till it has become sour; then strained, and boiled to a proper thickness to be eaten with milk or cream. This form of porridge is eaten especially at Christmas-time. It is extremely nutritious, and is thought good for children. The word itself is from the Anglo-Saxon word, *seaw*, meaning "juice."

It seems not unlikely that it was at the accession of Mary Queen of Scots to the throne, and the consequent introduction of many French habits and customs, that brought the boiling of the national brose into fashion. That it was at first eaten without boiling, we know; but when the change took place it is impossible to determine, unless we place it at about this time, for the very name "porridge," the dictionary tells us, is derived from the old French word *porrée*, or *porée*, the early form of it being "pottage," or "parrage." The first, you will remember, occurs in the Bible, applied to a very famous dish of porridge which cost a birthright of priceless value in those days. The word comes originally from the Latin *porrum*, a leek; and the old French word *porrée* was applied to a kind of food made of beetroot, leeks, and pot-herbs, boiled in water, either with, or without meal; and so we approach our Scottish *kale brose*.

I have no doubt that nearly all my readers are acquainted with the word "porrenger," a silver, or china cup, with a cover, which used to form the favourite birthday-gift for a child; and many of them are yet treasured in old families as a relic of ancient days. This word "porrenger" comes from the French *potager* a soup basin. Words, and their origins and meanings carry us a long way back; and we have found ourselves with the patriarchs, even in our small study of the word "porridge," and we see that it was formerly applied to a kind of soup made of vegetables, and that our modern use restricts it to oatmeal, or wheatmeal only.

What is called "French oatmeal" porridge is delicious, and a cupful of it forms the best possible "night-cap" for an invalid, or for those who suffer from insomnia. Take two tablespoonfuls of the best oatmeal, and mix with some cold water. Then add to it a pint and a half of milk, and boil slowly, stirring continually till it come to a proper thickness, and the meal is cooked. It will take from fifteen to twenty minutes, to be quite cooked, and burns very easily on account of the milk.

Savoury porridge is a very nice dish, and is a great favourite with vegetarians. It is said to promote sleep also, and I have no doubt the onions in it would assist and further that object. Take two or three tablespoonfuls of oatmeal, and two or three ounces of onion, a pint of milk, a quarter of an ounce of butter, and a teaspoonful of pepper and salt mixed. Boil the onions in two waters, and when they are tender, shred them finely, and add them to the milk while boiling. Then sprinkle in the oatmeal lightly, and add the butter, and the pepper and salt. Boil for ten or fifteen minutes, and serve with sippets of toasted bread. Grated cheese may be used instead of the onions, to stir in with the oatmeal. For a sweet porridge, add sugar, raisins, or currants instead of the onions and cheese.

Thin porridge goes by the name of gruel, and a few lines must be devoted to this form of the article. One or two tablespoonfuls of oatmeal are used to the pint of water or milk, according as we require the gruel thin or thick. When the water nearly boils stir in the meal, which you have mixed previously with a little cold water and salt. Or you may pour the boiling water, or milk, on the oatmeal by degrees, and when well mixed, return the whole to the pan. Boil it a few minutes, skim and strain it if needful; and pour the gruel into basins. The gruel is much improved if you steep the oatmeal in the cold water for several hours before it is required. When made with milk, it is called in Yorkshire "milk and oatmeal," and in Scotland described as "milk porridge." If you want to taste gruel in perfection, you must make a journey to America, for it is made on board any of the ocean steamships better than we can ever manage to manufacture it at home. I do not know the reason for this, and have inquired several times whether there be any special method of preparation on board ship, but failed to find any solution of the difficulty. I do not enter here into any of the many patent articles of excellent quality which are to be found in the market, as they can be used, or not, as required; and in the case of an invalid, the attending medical man is the best person to advise.

Many years ago there used to be a rule or proper method for eating porridge, viz., you were to put it into a soup-plate, or basin, generally the former, and make a hole in the centre of it with your spoon, and into this hole you were to pour the milk, and to eat it from the circumference of the plate, dipping each spoonful into the reservoir in the middle. This ensured the right mixture, exactly, of milk and porridge, which was a matter of great consequence to the true lover of the article. Instead of milk you could use butter and brown sugar, treacle or golden syrup; or else butter and grated cheese. Pepper and salt with butter were also in high favour; but there are differing opinions as to the milk, some people preferring it hot, with the porridge, and others cold; but in my opinion, cream surpasses milk a thousand-fold, if no consideration of cost deter you from having it. So far as invalids and old people are concerned, they should have cream whenever possible, on account of its superior digestive qualities.

Under the various names of "Stirabout," "Burgout," "Polenta," "Mush," and "Hasty-pudding," we find porridge masquerading in various climes. "Polenta" is a purely Italian name, and "Mush" an American appellation for the porridge made from maize or Indian meal. This description will be the better for a longer boiling—at least three-quarters of an hour to one hour, as it takes longer to cook than other flours. The mode of making is the same as the first recipe given for oatmeal porridge.

I was going to say Stirabout was an Irish name, at least I have mostly heard it used by Irish people; but I bethought me of the late Lord Beaconsfield's advice, to verify your quotations, so perhaps my facts might be the better worth stating if subjected to the same process; and I find, on reference, that it is a "dictionary word," and in addition to its being made of boiling water and oatmeal, it is also made (says Halliwell) of oatmeal and dripping, mixed together, and stirred about in a pan. This last form is marked as of English origin.

I find that "Burgout" (also spelt Burgoo) is said to be a provincial English word, having probably a Welsh origin from "burgm," yeast, "cawl" or "gawl," cabbage. It is said, however, to be a kind of oatmeal pudding or thick porridge used by seamen. It is made by adding one pint of water slowly to eight ounces of oatmeal till the mixture be quite smooth, when it should be boiled for a quarter of an hour. It is eaten with butter, and pepper and salt.

"Hasty pudding" is an English name for a "minute pudding" or batter, which is a great favourite in the nursery. It is made with eight ounces of flour and one pint of either water or milk. Stir the flour into the boiling milk very gradually, let it boil a few minutes, during which time it should be constantly beaten and stirred; salt and an egg, or a little butter and sugar, according to taste, should be added. A couple of bay leaves are sometimes boiled in the milk for flavouring.

"Hasty pudding," however, we find applied in the United States to a dish which sounds curiously like "Mush," and it is explained as a thick pudding or batter made of Indian-meal stirred into boiling water. "Polenta," the Italian form of porridge made from Indian-meal, seems exactly like the American mush, so far as I know, and both of them, as I have stated, are made exactly like boiling porridge; but I think mush needs rather longer time.

Either porridge or mush can be used when cold, and makes a very delicious addition to the vegetable course of the dinner if cut in slices and lightly fried in butter. It may also be fried, and cheese toasted on it. It can also be used as a "sweet" with sugar sprinkled over it, and some people make it into a pudding, adding a little milk and a few sultanas.

Two years ago, when we were staying at a small town in Italy, they used very frequently to serve as a vegetable slices of a polenta made of semolina, which fried when cold, as I have described, we thought so good that we have transferred it to our English *cuisine*, and find it forms a very favourite addition to the vegetable course.

A kind of porridge is made in Greece, but I do not know the name it bears there, with either flour, maize, or oatmeal mixed with honey and eggs. Take one heaped tablespoonful of oatmeal, the same of honey, beaten-up with the yolk of an egg, then pour on the mixture a pint of quite boiling water and boil the whole for a quarter of an hour.

Peas-porridge, a porridge made exactly like the oatmeal only with peas-meal substituted, was highly recommended some years ago, and many people liked it; but I cannot say that I did, and still think pea-flour is much better used in making pea-soup.

And lastly, for the benefit of those who take an interest in knowing what they eat and its value as a nutritious food, I will subjoin the analysis of the composition of the Highlander's porridge. Oatmeal contains according to Pavy's table—

Water	15·00
Albumen	12·60
Starch	58·40
Sugar	5·40
Fat	5·60
Salts	3·00

Since writing my description of the ancient method of eating porridge, I have discovered where it had its origin, viz., in the essay by the celebrated Count Romford on "The Pleasure of Eating and the Means that may be Employed for Increasing It." This essay, with all of those by the same author, is well worth reading, and when one reads his life and learns what a wonderful man he was, and what he did, we shall not wonder that his ideas and thoughts are so often quoted. He was the founder of the "Royal Institution" in Albemarle Street, and his experiments in scientific and economic cookery are hardly yet, even though a century has elapsed since they were made, appreciated at their true value.