

would put the children to bed if she were not there? Who would give them their supper? She must be brave, these tears, these bitter heartfelt tears were selfish, she must awaken to the realities of life—that long-cherished dream of hers had passed now—passed as the sunshine passes, or as the wind which blows for one moment and then loses itself in calm.

An arm was suddenly gently pressed around her, a voice whispered her name. She looked up terrified and confused half fainting with fear and joy. It was Leonard. She could see his clear cut, noble features by the yellow gas-light. Why had he come? It must all be a dream. What could he want with her—

poor, desolate and alone as she was? She tried to loosen his arm but could not, and in another moment her tired head had pillowed itself on his breast.

For a few moments neither spoke, and then, by the light of the stars he renewed that covenant made with her so long ago, and then he told her of his toiling in the colonies, of the courage her last words had given him, of the love he had always felt for her—that love which was at the root of all his work and all his success—that love which neither absence could banish nor poverty diminish. A great deal more was said after this—a great many confidences exchanged, and the lustre of Lady

Cecil's jewels would have paled ignominiously before the sparkle in Nora's love-lit eyes.

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When Nora returned to the "Gothic Manor" the fresh and radiant bride of Leonard Sinclair it would have been difficult to have recognised in her the little pale-faced toiler of a few months back.

Her first impulse was to visit that great oak-tree under whose shelter she had so often pondered. The old, creaking bough had been severed from the bark, and in its place, fresh, young, and green a sapling had sprung forth.

"LENTILS."

By the Author of "We Wives," etc.



HERE is a quaint old-world sentiment connected with the word that heads this paper. Into the far-away ages the thought of lentils carries us. Ever since Jacob sod-pottage red lentils have formed a staple

article of diet for some peoples. We like to think of him and his sportsman-like brother, in their mother's black goat-skin tent, under the blue dome of a Syrian sky, partaking of the savoury mess. We also remember how some weary desert wanderers recalled more luxurious days and longed for Egyptian food. We know the *pièce-de-résistance* in those "flesh-pots" meant for the poor slaves lentils cooked in different ways, and only sometimes diversified with melons, leeks, and mud-fish. The Israelites had eaten those grains under the blue, outspreading wings of Ra, the sun-god, and even "angels' food," white and sweet as honey, was flavourless after them.

Then in the land of the Chaldees, four beautiful, wealthy, wise young men asked for and flourished on the simple stew. They were a favourite crop too in the Holy Land during the reign of David.

What the Arab chief partook of as his simple, daily fare. What was found in the storehouse of a Babylonian monarch. What was chosen by the fairest of the children which did eat the king's meat. What was thought fit for a place in a present to royalty. (2 Sam. xvii. 28.) What was sufficient to sustain a prophet in health for 390 days. (Ezek. iv. 9.) Surely such an article of diet must be worthy of a chapter all to itself.

That is why I am writing this article upon Lentil Cookery.

Now, in spite of ancient history, many of us are almost ignorant of the virtues possessed by these dark-coloured seeds of Erum Lens. We know they are the produce of a vetch-like plant, still largely cultivated in the East. In its expensive form of Revalenta Arabica some of us may have tempted our invalids with it. Which of us have given lentils a fair trial on our own tables? Yet in point of nourishment these little orange, red-brown seeds come first in vegetarian menus. Beans

and peas take secondary places. The richest of all foods in albuminoids and nitrogenous matter is this much-neglected "pulse." Surely we ought not then to banish it from our list of wholesome foods.

My first recipe will not, I think, be found in any cookery-book.

It is *Dhâl*.—A dish largely patronised in the East. I learned its secret from a poor shivering Madrasee, wandering in the streets of London. For a hot meal and small backsheesh he taught me this economical and tasty recipe. Since then *dhâl* has been a frequent visitor on our table. It speaks well for its popularity that it never comes to stay! Even the servants—those dainty *gourmands*—delight in it.

Take half a pound of lentils (a breakfast-cupful). Thoroughly wash and put in a stewpan with sufficient water to cover, a pinch of salt, and a small onion. Simmer very gently, and as the *dhâl* drinks up the water add more until it is all a smooth, soft pulp. About half an hour it will take. Now add a spoonful of curry-powder, a pinch of turmeric (if at hand, it is not essential), a lump of butter about the size of a walnut, and a couple of cloves. Boil up and serve with a crown of nicely-fried onion-rings, and in a wall of white rice grains.

This is a pretty and economical dish, yellow, brown, white, forming a tempting combination.

Our next recipe shall be a savoury. We will call it *Erum Kouftas*. This has decidedly an Egyptian sound about it.

Take four ounces of red lentils. Soak for a few minutes, until all loose black husks rise to the surface. Strain. Put the damp seeds into enough cold water to cover them, and boil until soft. About twenty minutes will do. Now stir into the pulp a piece of butter about the size of a walnut, and season with salt and pepper to taste; also add a sprinkling of grated nutmeg.

Have ready some good dripping pastry. (Quarter of a pound of fat to half a pound of flour is a good proportion.) Roll out very thin. Cut some rounds from it with the edge of a teacup. Now take your cool pottage and put a teaspoonful on to each round. Wet the edges and press well together. When stuck mould into balls, dip each into beaten egg, and roll in a saucer of well-dried, finely-sifted, slightly browned bread crumbs.

When required to be served, have ready a saucepan of boiling fat. Arrange your croquettes in a frying-basket, and when a thin blue smoke rises from the pot (not before) plunge all in. Two or three minutes and your savoury is done.

Crisp and dry and whole will emerge your

Egyptian kouftas, tempting enough for any epicure. When dishing, garnish each rissole with a sprig of fried parsley, and place a pile of snow-white rice in the centre, coroneted with the same.

Lentil Porridge.—One occasionally gets tired of oatmeal stir-about. For a change try the following recipe.—Put three ounces of lentil-flour into a bowl with a little salt, and blend smoothly with a few drops of cold water. Have ready a pint of boiling water, and, after pouring on to the basin, turn quickly into a saucepan and boil for ten minutes. Just before serving stir in a good lump of butter, for we must never forget that all lentil food requires the addition of fat in some form. Send to table with a bowl of sugar and a jug of thick cream. When eating this, we no longer wonder at the choice of the four wise children of old, and do not doubt that they grew fat.

Lentil Fritters.—Take some cold lentil porridge left from our last recipe. Have ready an equal quantity of fine breadcrumbs, a spoonful of dried sweet herbs, a little pepper and salt, and half an onion chopped. Mix all together and shape into flat cakes. The lentils ought to be moist enough to bind without any additional help. If too dry, a drop of milk or cream will do no harm. When shaped according to fancy, dust with flour and fry a nice rich brown. A golden ring of onion on each cake, and a piece of bright green parsley, give the final touches to our dish of fritters.

Lentil Scones.—For these we require a little cold lentil pulp prepared as for porridge; knead into it just as much wheat-flour as will enable you to roll it out three-quarters of an inch thick. Add a little baking powder. Cut into three-corner pieces and bake in the oven. The scones will look just as if made of ordinary seconds or meal. These must be eaten hot, split open, and plentifully buttered. Whilst enjoying them, we may think of the Israelites eating this "bread to the full" on the banks of the Nile. It is exactly identical with their "cakes."

Lentil Purée.—The ingredients needed for this thick, creamy soup are—one pint of Egyptian lentils, one carrot, two large onions, a few sifted herbs, two ounces of butter, two-and-a-half pints of water. Salt and pepper to taste, and a modicum of curry powder. After washing the pulse and carefully removing every black skin, put it, with the carrot (cut up), onion (in rings), thyme and parsley (crushed), into a saucepan containing the water, which must be boiling rapidly. Let all cook for an hour until a soft mass alone is to be seen. Rub this with the back of a wooden spoon, through a wire sieve, and thin with a

little more water in which the butter has previously been melted. Let this mixture simmer gently for half-an-hour more. Just before the completion of that time, stir in a teaspoonful of curry powder. Boil up once and serve with sippets of fried bread.

Ruddy Cream or Lentil Crêcy.—A little preparation overnight is necessary for this dish, for the quart of red lentils required must be soaked for twelve hours. We also want some ready prepared stock—a few slices of stale crumb of bread or a French roll, and half a cupful of rice. In the morning we put four carrots cut up in disks, two sliced onions, and the shred heart of a lettuce into a stewpan with two ounces of butter and simmer for five minutes. Then the lentil pulp should be added, and one pint of stock; whilst this is stewing gently, grate your slices of bread.

About a quarter of a pound of crumbs will be needed. At the end of half-an-hour, add stock enough to make a quart of cream in all, and boil for another hour. Stir in and leave to soak in the mixture your heap of bread-crumbs. When well mixed and softened, rub all through a tammy and pour over a cupful of boiled rice.

Lentil Soup.—In all the preceding recipes we have been asked to use Egyptian lentils. This time we need one pint of the green German ones. The last recipe would cost one-and-sixpence a quart (including good stock). This soup could be made for sixpence. We begin by boiling our seeds for a quarter-of-an-hour, being careful to use an enamelled saucepan. Contact with an iron one would turn our lentils black. At the end of fifteen minutes we pour off any superfluous moisture

and add a very small quantity of fresh water, in which two ounces of butter has been melted. Then we put our pan at the side of the range and simmer till quite soft. A quart of any liquor in which meat has been boiled, is now stirred in, and some slices of well fried onions. Boil up once and serve.

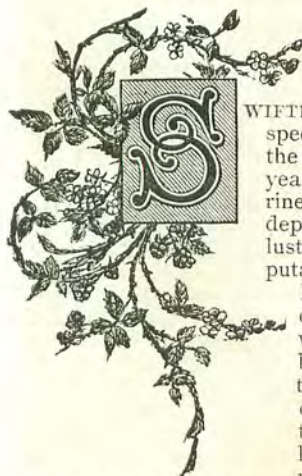
Perhaps these eight recipes of how to use lentils may lead my readers to make further experiments for themselves.

It was a maxim amongst the Stoics that, "A wise man acts always with reason, and prepares his own lentils." Would we not all wish to be wise?

Pliny has left it on record that lentils produce mildness and moderation of temper in those that eat them. Could we ask for more? Gentleness, reason and wisdom to come from a lentil diet? By all means let us try it.

A CHILD OF GENIUS.

By LILY WATSON, Author of "The Hill of Angels," "In the Days of Mozart," etc.



CHAP. VII.

SWIFTLY the weeks sped on towards the close of the year. Katharine's expected departure lent lustre to her reputation in the

English colony. She was going to be the adopted daughter of an Australian millionaire! So ran the re-

port, and Miss Lovell chose to think she was treated with more respect and attention in consequence. Douglas Gordon said very little about the approaching change in the Duvigny household, until one day when the first hard frost allowed him to take Katharine skating.

The two climbed the hill behind the town and entered the forest that lends beauty and picturesqueness to the lake embosomed within it. Along the solemn silent wood path they walked side by side, until the sounds of mirth were heard from afar, and they came suddenly upon the *Lac à patiner* in the depth of the forest, with a gay throng skimming over its polished surface. Douglas was delighted. He put on his companion's skates, and away they flew together. One and another acquaintance greeted Katharine, and congratulated her on her coming change. The delight of the exercise exhilarated her and brought new colour to her cheeks, new brightness to her eye. It was a day of ecstasy.

"I shall not have such good skating in England, I expect," she observed, when the two had finally left the gay scene behind them and were walking home. "But there will be other things to make up for it."

"I'm thinking it would need a great

deal to me to make up for my mother if I had one," Douglas observed gravely.

There was a hint of reproach in the tone, that Katharine felt.

"I am sorry to leave her! I know you think I'm not!" she burst out. "You've no sympathy for me."

"Nay, my sympathy's for her!" Douglas answered. "But I'll e'en do my best for her when she's lost her bairn."

"It's better for her," Katharine insisted. "And as for my stepfather, he's wild with joy at the prospect."

Douglas was silent, but swung his skates vigorously backwards and forwards.

"You haven't any sympathy with the pursuit of Art," Katharine continued energetically, feeling herself somehow arraigned before this youthful judge.

"I haven't any sympathy with selfishness."

"How dare you! what business have you to call me selfish, I should like to know?"

"It's just a liberty we both take at whiles, I'm thinking, to speak very plainly."

"You know it's best for me to go," urged Katharine passionately.

"I'm no saying it is not—there may be, and there are good reasons, no doubt; but you might be less selfish over it. You might see when your mother's breaking her heart, and fit to greet all day long, and show her a little kindness now and again, or let her think you've a heart too."

Douglas was evidently much excited and spoke with an earnestness unusual to him.

"You think so much of your music—your 'art' as you call it," he continued.

"One cannot think too much of Art," Katharine proudly and scornfully replied.

"Ah, but there are different ways!" cried Douglas. "If Art is worthy the name, it's just a little reflection from the light of the world. I cannot put it into fit words—you'll maybe laugh at me—but all great Art, if it's poetry, or if it's painting—and music most of all—is just

trying to show us something that must come from God. With music it's so most of all, I say, for there's nothing in nature to copy from, as there is in painting or sculpture—it just comes out of the Infinite. Well then, if that's so, selfishness and small things like that are just incongruous with the majesty and beauty of it."

"I had not the faintest idea you could talk like this!" said Katharine astonished, and suddenly remembering Douglas's keen appreciation of poetry and frequent announcements that one day he too might be a poet. "I'll forgive you your abuse of me, for such beautiful thoughts about music."

"Nay, nay! I'm not abusing you!" said Douglas, looking away at her praise, while an unwonted expression stole over his freckled face. "I'm only loth to see anybody who aspires to be an artist, think that she's helping it on by selfishness and forgetting all about her duties to her own kith and kin."

"At any rate you'll be glad when I'm gone!" declared Katharine with asperity. "You'll learn French quicker."

"Oh, aye, I'll maybe learn French quicker," was all his response.

"You'll have no temptation to talk English then when you ought to be speaking French," she pursued. "And your study will never be made untidy; and no one will want to borrow your books."

"As you say," rejoined Douglas, "I'll doubtless be the gainer."

Nothing more was to be obtained from him, and half piqued, half impressed, Katharine marched homewards without further reference to the subject of her departure. The date was fixed now; early in January. Not very much could be done in the way of preparation, for Mr. Lovell had signified his wish that Katharine's outfit should be purchased in London. Still Madame Duvigny strove hard to put the best possible aspect on the girl's scanty wardrobe and trivial possessions.

She was to come and see her daughter by-and-by; but Mr. Lovell, who evidently was "master in his own house"