

WHY WE COOK, AND THE HYGIENIC VALUE OF COOKERY.

By L. H. YATES.

"A true cook, be it remembered, is an artist."—*Theodore Child.*



An American writer, to whom we owe many bright and wise things, speaking of nutrition in a large sense, has described it as "A stream of materials in motion, in the midst of which we live." "Our apparently solid bodies," she says, "are but processions of materials. While the procession passes a given point we live in it, that is all. Do not imagine that we are permanent objects through which dinners may or may not pass. The dinners are the fixed consideration, we the transient one. It is a matter of indifference to the dinner who eats it, or if it is eaten at all, but a matter of terrible importance to us."

This, at first sight, strikes us as a way of putting what is doubtless a truth that is not altogether flattering to human nature; if we go further into the thought we realise that the standing ground whereon we rear life, or physical maintenance, is indeed "little firmer than the rolling barrel on which the clown stands, it has to be kept going in order to support us at all."

Unless the business of supporting the body be carried on unfalteringly, no other business can be properly attended to.

The road from market to kitchen, kitchen to table, table to stomach, is a continuous one; it grows wider, more attractive, and more interesting as we pursue it, but the road which begins in the phosphates and carbons that the earth holds in reserve, is the same road that loses itself at last in the clear brain and tense muscles of our frame.

The herb and vegetable that grew in the soil ate of the substances of that soil, and developed; the sheep and cattle devoured the green things and roots and threw; man takes the vegetables and adds to them meat—or vegetables twice eaten—and secures his share of nutritive force. Here we have the elements of nutrition.

In addition to the elements man adds a process that is unknown to the animal, viz., the preparation and cooking of food. According as this process becomes more refined and perfect so it becomes more subtle and complicated, so much so that it demands the whole attention of a special functionary, who is every whit as important in society as the carpenter, the potter and the smith.

The necessity that makes cooked food essential to civilised man arises from the fact that his digestive system varies according to the amount of labour exacted from it, and according to the ease or difficulty with which the supply is furnished.

Food ready cooked is half digested, hence a saving of energy, time and force. Raw food takes an elaborate digestive system for its conversion into meat.

Far back in the earlier stages of civilisation it took all man's strength to get his food, a ceaseless effort to catch up with his food-supply, a constant "struggle for existence." As man conquered in the struggle he did not have to run after his food, he could make it grow, he produced it. In this ever-growing process of nutrition, man has so learnt to govern and manage his food-supply, that as long as our means of transportation and

distribution continue we shall live and develop the powers and faculties which our food-supply enables us to cultivate. We still have to "make our living," but our completer organisation has made it unnecessary for every individual to be absorbed in the process of preparing and producing his own food. Society, by setting apart certain members to do certain kinds of work, effects an economy of force, energy and material for the community.

While the primary reason for cooking food is undoubtedly that of saving energy in the consumer, the secondary one is that of the economising of the food-stuffs themselves, by enabling the greatest amount of good to be drawn from them with the least possible amount of waste. Scarcely subservient to these comes another reason, namely this—that as refinement of nature increases taste is developed, and the eye, the palate and the nostrils all require to be thought of. Hence we see how important is the education of that functionary who holds so important a place in our household organisation; no matter how fine the meat may be that the farmer and butcher supply, how rare the fruits and the condiments we receive from the grocer, or how choice the fish may be that the fisherman has toiled to get, the one pair of unskilled hands in our kitchen may ruin the whole procession of materials in a few minutes' time. At no stage in all the long road is there need for more energy or skill.

We are apt to forget that the art of cookery refers not only to the pleasing serving of food and maybe its dainty preparation, but the artist here has to have in mind food principles, and plan so that real nourishment be given at the right stage of life.

The building-up, more especially the keeping-up of a beautiful human frame lies in a great degree in our own hands. Raisers of cattle and breeders of poultry have long grasped this truth and acted accordingly, but while every fact that can be gleaned about methods of feeding stock is carefully tested by trial, the study of human dietaries is pursued only by those who have earned for themselves the title of crank and faddist.

Defective nutrition is at the bottom of half the evil and crime that debases human nature, as it is also the primary cause of deformities and disease. Under-fed or over-fed the result in either case is similar.

We need to realise how certainly the work of the cook and the housewife take hold of the very springs of life. The work done by them, the kind of work and the quality of it, makes or mars even the character and morals of those who come under their care, but especially does it make or mar those bodies which, as temples of the Holy Ghost, should be in line and form, fair, fine, strong and pure. Study, then, the laws of food, and by them build, not for the present generation's comfort alone, but for the well-being of the generation yet to come.

The more complex our modern human life becomes the greater becomes the strain on the human system; the outlay is not always the same; there are times when we are not called upon to great physical or mental exertion, then again there are periods of excessive strain; these varyings have to be met by varying supplies of nutrition. The handful of dates which will satisfy the Arab will not meet the needs of the brainy merchant, neither will the coarse abundance found on the table of the miner or labourer.

Cooking is variously regarded; in itself perhaps a "low" function, comparatively speaking, one of the traits which bespeak us as "of the earth—earthy," it is nevertheless an art, a science, a craft and a profession, or had we not better substitute service for profession, seeing that we entrust it to hands far from professional, leaving it too often to the least capable people to perform?

If ever cooking is to become worthy of the title of profession it must be pursued by those who are specialised for the purpose. It is a folly to say that all women should be cooks; we might as well demand that all men should be architects or doctors.

While cooking that is performed by a trained and intelligent functionary becomes possessed of all the dignity of a profession, it is also a craft because of the skill that must be acquired if it is to be perfectly handled; it is a science too, because it has laws of its own just as the science of medicine has. The work that the physician does is too often that of remedying the work that the cook has done ill. Alas, it is too often sadly true that the cook makes so ill that the physician's remedy is of no avail at all.

Cooking is also an art, in that its highest votaries are "born, not made," and that their work is open to the inspiration of genius. It is a vehicle for the expression of fancy, and of the colour sense.

At the latest exhibition held by the Universal Cookery and Food Association, one of the most interesting exhibits was the model kitchen of sixty years ago, contrasted with a model of a kitchen of the present date. It seemed a case where extremes met. The heavy, clumsy appliances, very few in number, of the early Victorian age, might explain the taste of the times for large, substantial and solid dishes; but surely we have added to our labour tenfold when we surround ourselves with such needless accessories as our modern furnisher would have us think are becoming!

Striking the line between these we shall arrive at something like a real idea of the value of saved labour and of helpful utensils.

While lined copper pans represent the acme of good housewifery in the eyes of the ruler of a large establishment, and in his *chef's* opinion, in the small household where labour is limited, they are a burden to life. Let glazed earthenware, "granite" ware, fire-proof china, and enamelled pans, take the place, and we have cleanliness ensured us, while the quality of our dish will not be changed.

Our Puritan fathers looked upon cooking stoves as an unrighteous lessening of the curse laid upon toil in the garden of Eden; and women's work has been handicapped for generations by something of the same narrow spirit.

We are wisely trying to substitute cooking stoves for the open ranges that have long been a bugbear to the middle-class English housewife. Other nations—the French, Americans, Germans, Austrians—all have long since found out better means and methods.

While there is much to be said in praise of both oil and gas stoves for cooking purposes, more especially for the latter, the excellences of which are so numerous that I could wish every housewife to be the possessor of a gas cooker of some kind, yet, personally I would place the American kitchener, or the French *cuisinière* before them all, for every purpose, indeed, except for the roasting of meat.

The joint that has been suspended in the middle of a gas oven and cooked for just its proper length of time, will be found to be almost identical in flavour to that which was roasted on the jack before an open fire, and very much superior to the so-called roast done in the *range oven*, which is really baked and not roasted at all.

The newer methods of cooking by electricity are yet too undeveloped and too costly to be of much use to us; but the promises held out to us of what shall be are far beyond our dreams. In the meantime the developments of the modern gas range are more than enough to satisfy every possible requirement, and with careful usage will cost less in fuel than the ordinary range fire.

The improvements in cooking utensils and in methods of work which are made from time to time, are generally originated by those, who, having thought the subject worthy of their study, have become artists and proficient; but, unfortunately, many of their methods and inventions only become adopted in the majority of homes after they have

reached them by passing through the hands of a class who have neither appreciation for, nor the intelligence to comprehend, their right advantages. Happily for us we are rapidly awakening to the knowledge that work in the kitchen is essentially noble, honourable, human work; in a very few years' time we may hope to see it undertaken by the most highly-trained and skilled workers of the community.

In proportion to the value that we put upon this work so will it rank in our labour market. While English people persist in regarding it as "servant's work," and only suited to the hands of the class into whose care it is given at present, so long will cultivated intelligences think it an unworthy sphere for their employment. The States are far ahead of us here, partly because the true servant class is there almost unknown. Household economy and economics in every branch, not only have their special schools and centres of demonstration, but a practical course of their study is part of a regular college curriculum. More than that, in Boston, the meals of school children and

older students have been thought sufficiently important to be put under civic control.

Mrs. Ellen Richards, chemist in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, writes that, the prevalent disregard of the importance of human dietetics is especially noticeable in connection with the life of students. If a student breaks down, the remark is heard on all sides—"What a pity he studied so hard!" and no one asks, "Was he well fed?"

To sum up then, since the repair and building-up of the human frame is one of the chief businesses of life, it follows that whatever economises time in this respect leaves more opportunity for other works. As what is most easily digested affords the most nourishment, proper food, properly cooked and prepared for digestion adds to our strength and length of life, increases our usefulness, and, if we may indeed feel all to be true that is told us on this head, does much to determine our mental and moral character, for what we eat makes us what we are, say some.

(To be continued.)

"IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—;"

OR,

MADGE HARCOURT'S DESOLATION.

CHAPTER V.

JACK'S DEPARTURE.

It was with anything but a light heart that Jack left for London two weeks later.

In spite of the delightful prospect before him, of a trip on the ocean, in a well-appointed yacht with jovial companions, he could not banish a troubled



feeling from his mind. All the way to London, look where he would, his sister's face, as he had last seen it, rose before him. He was thoroughly anxious about her, for there had been something strange about her expression that he could not fathom. It was not exactly reproach or grief that her eyes expressed, but a dreary hopelessness, that he could not but know should have no place on so young a face, and it puzzled and worried him.

He felt he ought to have stayed with her longer; that he was acting selfishly in making his visit so short; and however little a man may acknowledge such pricks of conscience, he seldom feels easy under them.

It was with a sense of real relief that he at last stepped from the train in London and found his friend, Guy Fawcett, waiting for him. The latter was in high spirits, and full of their

coming trip, and, in five minutes, Jack had forgotten everything but the pleasures of the moment. For Guy was just such another careless, pleasure-loving man as Jack, and whenever these two were together, there was little room for shadows.

The yachting excursion in prospect rendered them even more lively than usual, and on being joined by a third member of the party, their exuberance of spirit became almost beyond bounds.

They started off at once on a last shopping expedition to the Stores, the principal item to buy being kitchen utensils, and as none of them knew in the least what they wanted, the proceeding proved somewhat ludicrous. Guy wanted three saucepans and Jack only two, while the third man, Dick Herman, was quite certain one would be sufficient. Then again, Jack wanted a gridiron as well as a frying-pan, and Guy would have it that a frying-pan answered the same purpose, therefore it wasn't necessary.

Finally, after having sorely tried the patience of the man who served them, and come to the wise conclusion that they didn't any of them know much about it, they decided to leave the matter in his hands, and told him to furnish them with whatever they would require for a six weeks' trip.

They then took a stroll down Piccadilly, and, after ordering an unconscionable amount of tobacco and cigars, turned into their club for tea. Here they were joined by the other man of the party, and a general stampede followed, during which they discovered that the last mentioned had already furnished the yacht with kitchen-appliances, and therefore they were likely to somewhat represent a strolling caravan laden with pots and pans.

For a few moments they were at a loss

to discover a way out of the difficulty, and then Guy Fawcett, with his usual aptitude, hit on a plan.

"I'll tell you what, you fellows," he exclaimed, "we can easily get out of it by starting a few hours earlier! Let's go by the nine train, and wire to the Stores, that, being obliged to start much earlier than intended, we shall have to countermand the order."

This wicked suggestion met with universal consent, and they made a move at once to go and finish their packing.

Unfortunately, in the general excitement next morning, the telegram was forgotten, with the result that a most unlooked-for display of pots and pans was found to adorn their chambers on their return.

It was not until late in the evening that Jack had time to let his thoughts return to Madge and to his visit home. He and Guy were having a quiet pipe after their dinner, when he suddenly recollected he had bought two books for her and rose to get them.

Guy watched him lazily, with a half-curious air, lounging back the while in an easy chair, with his feet planted on the mantelshelf. He had heard Jack give the order and been surprised at the tenor of it, but had forgotten all about it, until he saw him place the books on the table and open them.

"You're looking mighty serious, old man," he remarked presently. "If it weren't too utterly beyond the bounds of probability, I should be inclined to think you were going to wade through one of those learned books yourself, with a view to laying claim to the possession of an intellectual taste," and he laughed good-humouredly. "As a matter of fact, I don't suppose you'd be able to make head or tail of a single page."

"I don't believe I should," replied

Saviour's love is immeasurable and enough for each and all of us to-day. Do you ask what the young man's story has to do with our subject? Let us read on, and we shall find that when Jesus was left with His disciples their minds were full of it. Peter, ever the foremost to speak, addressed the Master. "Lo, we have left all and have followed Thee. What shall we have therefore?"

Peter did not say "I" but "we," nor did he claim a larger share for himself than for others. You can read Christ's answer for yourselves. You and I have an equal share in it with Peter and his fellow-disciples, and on the same conditions. The promise includes the eternal life on which the rich young man had just turned his back; but with the sweet words came the warning voice, "But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." Surely one part of this message must have been meant for those who push selfishly to the front and think more of personal gain than of the claims of others, or of His will "from whom are all things."

At that moment no disciple seems to have asked for more or better than his fellows; but

a little later the mother of Zebedee's children came to Jesus with her sons, "desiring a certain thing of Him." This was to secure for James and John the highest places, or at any rate those which were deemed most honourable in the kingdom of their Lord. Mothers of old were like those of to-day, bold on behalf of their children. In another place the brothers are said to have made the same request for themselves. In any case, their coming with their mother proved that even the beloved disciple was not free from selfishness. Mark the result on the rest. "And when the ten heard it they were moved with indignation against the two brethren;" judging that the mother was only the mouthpiece of her sons.

But for the presence of Jesus a wall of separation might have sprung up between the two brethren and the other ten. "Had not James and John with Peter been favoured above the rest already? They had been present on the Mount of Transfiguration, and had been permitted to see the raising of the ruler's daughter. What were they that the first places should be theirs also?" Softly on the ears of the angry ten fell the words of Jesus.

"Whoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." We hear no more of jealousies or of striving for first places amongst the chosen few, even though the traitor Judas was one of the ten.

If the mind were in us, my dear girl-friends, which was also in Christ Jesus, petty jealousies, envy and selfishness would disappear. There would be no striving after an unreasonable share of good things to the hurt of our neighbour, no grudging at the sight of another possessing what we could hardly hope for. We should look on the things of others as on our own, and rejoice at the blessings which had fallen to their lot from the good hand of our God. I have only named one or two of the invisible stones which go to the building of invisible walls between those who ought to live in love and unity. Time will permit no more, but when we meet again I shall briefly speak of several others.

(To be continued.)

WHAT TO COOK AND HOW TO COOK IT.

By L. H. YATES.

PART II.

SELECTING AND BUYING FOOD; HOW TO GAIN THE MOST VALUE FOR MONEY.

A CERTAIN amount of food daily must be consumed to repair the waste of muscle, heat, energy and water. The four principles which do this we class as follows: proteids, calories, carbo-hydrates, and water; besides these we require to consume a smaller amount of sulphur, phosphor, potassium, iron, magnesia, etc.; all these being found in conjunction with the most important elements, in meat, vegetables and fruits. Water we find not only in its own simple form and in other liquids, but vegetables and fruits furnish a large share, containing as much as from fifty to eighty per cent. of liquid over solid matter.

Bearing in mind that these are the principles which it is necessary to apply, we learn the value of a mixed and varied diet. Those faddists who strive to prove that a diet strictly of one kind is all that is required to support life, are battling against Nature herself.

The God who gave us "richly, all things to enjoy," did not intend us to try to prove to Him that we can do equally well without most of His gifts.

Proteids or nitrogenous constituents we find in lean of meat, eggs, fish and cheese, with certain forms of "pulse."

Hydro-carbons or calories, heat and force producers, we find in both animal and vegetable foods, with flour and bread, milk and all fats.

Carbo-hydrates are almost entirely vegetable; housekeepers know them as starch foods (or farinaceous), sugars, grains, as rice, oats, barley, gums, etc.

Salts, alkalines, sulphur, etc., we usually find in a sufficient quantity in conjunction with all the above, but occasionally it becomes advisable to take them in their own pure form as well.

The proteids we may call flesh or muscle foods, the fat heat foods, and the carbo-hydrates are work foods. According to age and occupation, to climate and constitution, we must determine how much of each it is needful to supply daily. Individual tastes, if directed by Nature, will often determine this

question to a nicety, only we must discriminate between a natural and a pampered taste.

Then while a pound of oatmeal gives a food value of six pounds of potatoes, the latter, however, are most necessary articles of diet where much meat is eaten regularly, as they supply carbons and phosphates that meat does not hold in sufficient quantity. Sailors who are largely fed on salt and pickled beef crave for potatoes and green vegetables, as these are Nature's antidote to the scurvy which is their torment.

Spinach, as it contains more iron than any other vegetable that it is possible to mention, is one of the most useful "green" vegetables we have; next in point of value comes cabbage, then celery, onions, leeks, asparagus, etc.: all are blood purifiers. It is not too much to say that every fruit (and every vegetable) in its season is necessary to health in some degree; we may do without them, but we are better with them. Note how carefully they have been apportioned, the sweeter drier kinds for autumn and winter, the acid, luscious, watery kinds for summer and the hot exhaustive days. If we have not the good fortune to live where we can gather what we will from tree and bush, our ability to avail ourselves of the varied and abundant supply is naturally limited by the capacity of our purse; yet, even then, an intelligent thinking purchaser may get a far greater variety and better value for the money laid out than one who chooses haphazard.

In choosing fish one broad rule may be laid down, namely, select the plump ones; long thin fish are never so prime in quality. Thick turbot, soles, mackerel, and haddock are far finer-flavoured than thin ones. Then the brightness of the eyes and skin are another test. To test the age of poultry look at the claws and feet; if young, these will break easily between the fingers and be fine-skinned; if old they are big, and hard to crack. The skin of a fowl also shows its age, and an old fowl is never so plump as a young one.

There are certain joints of meat which, expensive in themselves, yet become really cheaper than inferior portions, because of the different uses that may be made of them. Take a loin of mutton, for instance. From

the underpart all the tender fillet should be cut away, then cut off all the flap end, this latter will be useful for stewing. Remove the upper part from the bones and cut it into neat chops, the fillet the same, then these should be dipped in egg and bread-crumbs and fried in hot fat, serving them around a mound of spinach, beans, or fried potatoes, gravy to be made from the bones.

To stew the top lay it in a stewpan with the fat downwards, sprinkle it with seasoning, slice an onion over it, and let it fry gently in its own fat for an hour or so. Then lift out the meat, put a teacupful of cold water to the fat, and when it has risen to the top take it off. Mix a little cornflour in water, add it to the gravy, and some potatoes cut in slices, add a little brown sauce, more seasoning if required, and cutting the meat into neat squares, place these on the top, cover with the lid and cook until the potatoes are thoroughly tender.

Here we have two good dishes from one joint.

The under fillet can be taken from a joint of beef in the same way, and made into a delicious *entrée* or supper dish, without in any way interfering with the roast.

A neck of mutton is usually portioned out into three parts, viz.—"best end," "middle neck," and "neck;" hence we get a roasting joint, a piece for cutlets, which may be cut without much "trimming," and a piece for Irish stew, boiling, or a breakfast pie. By purchasing the whole neck we get it at sevenpence-halfpenny per pound, whereas if we buy the best cut alone we pay tenpence.

When there are many in the family to cater for, it is cheaper to buy bacon by the quarter-side. The best firms supply this at sevenpence-halfpenny per pound. The inferior parts are useful for boiling and eating cold, the better ones will grill. A good housekeeper will be exact about weights; waste can generally be avoided by buying sufficient but not too much, and calculations should extend even to such things as apples and potatoes. It is the bits left over at the various tables which run away with the money, and often cause a needless expenditure of time in turning them to account afterwards.

WHAT TO COOK, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

PART III.

SOUPS AND SOUP-MAKING.

"Nothing surely is so disgraceful to society as an unmeaning wastefulness."

Count Rumford.

It has been said—we will hope for the sake of our national credit that the statement is not true—that what one-half of society wastes would be sufficient for the other half to live upon. Even if this be not a "true bill" to bring against the wealthy as a class, it is unquestionably true that in the kitchens of the rich waste exists in a deplorable quantity. Unfortunately for us, the "unmeaning wastefulness" against which Count Rumford inveighs, is not confined to the rich; it exists in the middle-class households, and, for lack of knowledge, it exists largely amongst the working class, and even the very poor.

Only nature is untouched by this vice. She wastes nothing; even for "refuse" she has a use, and many uses. Never a plant grows but what has a function to fulfil; and if in some places she grows an abundance and in others allows a dearth, she but calls upon man to exert his powers and bring about the interchange that shall equalise the distribution. The world holds an ample provision of foods of all kinds for all creatures, but there is none to spare. We learn this latter fact when we go into a few statistics concerning the provisioning of a city like London.

In a useful book called *How London Lives*, the writer, who has collected his information first hand from reliable sources, tells us that out of the thousands of tons of fish alone, which come into the central markets and also direct to consumers, counting the whelk and the mussel as equally a unit with the salmon, the supply is not quite one fish per day per person, in this city. Of game and poultry, including the extra supplies at Christmas, the supply is not one bird per week per head, and we know there are thousands who never taste bird-flesh at all during the year, while there are a few hundreds who regard game and poultry as absolutely indispensable to their table. With meat the same rule of proportion exists, there is something under a pound per head per day brought into and distributed in the metropolis. Of milk, fruit, vegetables, bread and other "necessary" things the same may be said, in a slightly varying degree. What then becomes of the margin of surplus which we suppose exists when we see waste so lightly regarded? The fiction vanishes when we realise that the smallest waste means the direct robbery of one of our fellow-creatures—perhaps of many.

In wealthy households the food passes too frequently into the care of servants; these, springing from that strata of society which causes waste because of ignorance, have less regard still for that which is paid for by another, and are reckless in their use of it. Too much in quantity is ordered, and what is not used is thrown aside or suffered to rot; nothing can be made except by buying ingredients expressly for the dish, the "leavings" are always too insignificant to be of any account, and the very suggestion of economy is scouted by those who reign belowstairs.

If there is no excuse for such a state of affairs in the upper strata of society, there is still less excuse for those of the middle rank, for these have matters largely in their own hands to make or to mar. They have intelligence too, and books and papers that can help and instruct; if they will not see evil it is because they are wilfully blind. The wealthy are largely in the power of their

servants, the code of their society prevents them from coming very closely in contact with these even when they have the will, and one establishment is much like another in the order of its maintenance, but for the middle-class household such a position is quite untenable. Although waste is not so noticeable amongst the latter, it is impossible to say that it does not exist.

Want of management, method, and forethought, are the causes of waste here, just as they are amongst the working poor.

Waste, be it noted here, is not simply an abusing of food, but it also includes that want of economy that is shown by not knowing how to extract the greatest amount of nourishment out of the materials that are used.

When we realise that it is waste of food and food materials that really impoverishes a country, we shall understand that the practice of economy in its preparation is not merely a saving to our pockets, but is a duty that we owe to our fellow-creatures. Those who now die—literally—from starvation might be saved from death many times over by the food that is—literally—thrown away.

Of all forms of economy in the art of preparing food there is none more striking than that which is illustrated by the soup pot. The French are a nation of cooks, and they cannot afford to dine without soup, for in nine times out of ten the soup represents a saving and not an extra expenditure.

It must be a small household indeed that has not trimmings, bones, and odd scraps enough to supply a small stock-pot, and even if stock of this kind be lacking, we have a score of soups that require no stock, no bones nor meat whatsoever in their composition, yet they are nourishing, satisfying and cheap; and because they satisfy they are economisers of the meat course which follows them.

Personally I do not favour the use of stock as a foundation for soups; I reserve it for gravies, sauces and the like. So also does the French cook. *Bouillon*, or the broth from fresh beef, mutton or veal, fowls, etc., after boiling, is the clear soup to which he gives preference, varying it by distinctive flavours, but never spoiling it by cooking it a second time over with other bones, thickenings, colourings, etc. To do this is, in his opinion, a grave error.

Vegetable soups, when properly made, require no stock, and *consommé*, a soup quite apart from all others, cannot rightly be made from stock. But, soups apart, a small stock-pot—preferably a brown stone jar with lid—is an indispensable adjunct to a kitchen. Bones left at the table, if washed in warm water, should all add their remaining juices to the stock-pot. Bear in mind, please, that stock should never be allowed to boil, but only to simmer, that long, gentle stewing may extract all the goodness from even the most obdurate bone. Chop all bones with a hatchet into quite small pieces. The stock that is made from bones will usually be found to be a firm jelly when cold, owing to the gelatine that is concealed in the bones, while that made from fresh meat rarely sets.

In hot weather stock should be poured off the bones as soon as it is well cooked, then it should be re-heated every day.

Soups in general we may divide into three classes, clear, thickened, and *purées*. The distinction between a thickened soup and a *purée* lies in the fact of the former owing its consistency to some thickening agent, such as rice, tapioca, potato or corn-flour, etc., while a *purée* is obtained by a careful rubbing of all the ingredients through a tamis or wire sieve. Peas-soup is really a *purée* of peas, tomato soup a *purée* of tomatoes, etc.

When rice, vermicelli or macaroni are added to a clear soup they should have been previously boiled in water, otherwise they will be liable to give a cloudy appearance to the soup.

It is not customary to serve the vegetables in the tureen when true *bouillon* is intended; they are generally passed around separately; if vegetables are added it is better to treat the soup as a *julienne*, and cut them all into small even strips.

If a clear soup is to be thickened use tapioca or potato flour (*ficule*) as the medium. When added early enough tapioca will dissolve and lose all its grain. A small teaspoonful of potato flour (dissolved in cold water first) is sufficient to thicken a pint of clear soup.

For thickened soup that is not required to be clear there are many agents to be employed. Bread is one that is largely favoured in France and Switzerland, either broken up and put into the pot with the other ingredients, or cut into dice and delicately fried in butter, then put into the tureen for the soup to be poured upon it.

The first desideratum for the making of a successful *purée* is patience on the part of the cook. Upon a patient rubbing of all the ingredients through the sieve will hang all the quality of the soup.

In the South of France a vegetable *purée* that is made of lentils, or peas, potatoes, or beans, will have no other vegetable save onion and perhaps a few herbs added to it. After rubbing these, together with the liquor in which they were cooked, through the sieve and bringing up to the desired quantity by adding milk or water, the *purée* is rendered much richer and smoother to the taste if one or two beaten yolks of eggs are added on taking the pan from the fire. If eggs cannot be spared use a spoonful of cornflour and one or two of cream.

Take care to season all soups and *purées* sufficiently before bringing them to table, remembering the poor man's axiom, "It's the seasoning wot does it."

To make a white soup use milk for the main part of the liquid and add a little cream at the last; turnips, artichokes (Jerusalem), vegetable marrows, white haricot beans, celery and parsnips, all make delicious white soups.

If green peas-soup is not sufficiently green, add to it a little spinach juice or a little harmless vegetable colouring.

In rubbing the ingredients through the sieve a portion will be found to adhere to the bottom; this must be cleared, and from time to time it will be found necessary to add a little water to the contents of the sieve in order to pass them.

You will generally find that in recipes, boiling cream is ordered. The distinction is important; not merely is the risk of curdling avoided, but the flavour is different. Most people know how different coffee tastes that has had boiling milk added to it instead of unboiled, so it is with cream; when it is to be added to soup of any description boil it previously.

For many of us cream is a luxury to be done without, in soup or out of it. As a substitute try the yolk of an egg added to milk, but in adding it be wary. Boil the milk, taking care not to let it boil over, and pour it boiling into the soup. Have ready a hot soup tureen and throw the beaten yolk of an egg into this. Remove the soup from the fire, let the first heat pass, then add first a teaspoonful to the egg, whisking all the time, then a little more, and gradually the whole. When cream or milk is used a suspicion, no more, of nutmeg is an improvement to the flavour. In conclusion, do not make too much soup; "little and good" is far better than much and poor.

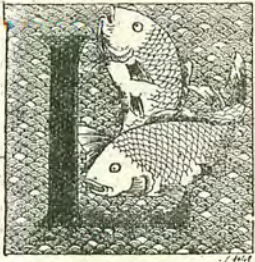
L. H. YATES.

WHAT TO COOK, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

PART IV.

NUTRITIVE DISHES OF FISH.

"Epicures from every clime . . . praise."—
W. Hone.



LONG ago it was thought that fish was the food *par excellence* for brain-workers, but this is now an exploded theory; the reason why it is more suited to those whose occupation is largely sedentary is that being

lighter than meat it is more easily digested, and being more easily digested it is more nutritious. It is questionable whether fish does in reality contain more phosphorus than other articles of diet; it may do, but for other reasons than this it ought to have a prominent place on our bill of fare. We are apt to forget that fish is every bit as nutritious as meat though not in the same proportions; among the poor there is almost a prejudice against it because it is regarded as "nothing to make a meal of." It is true that the amount of nutrition to be gained from it depends largely upon the way in which it is cooked.

Under-cooked fish is more to be dreaded than under-cooked meat, but when over-cooked it is even more worthless.

Unfortunately fish is comparatively an expensive article of diet; this is partly due to the fact that demand is out of proportion to the supply, consequently prices have to be kept up that even small profits may be realised.

Those who live in or near London and can possibly avail themselves of the opportunity of visiting the central markets, will find that late in the afternoon, just before closing time, fish may be procured for less than half the price at which it was charged in the morning. A fine seven-pound cod for a shilling, for instance. For country people and those who have only the local fishmonger to deal with, the facilities now offered of obtaining fish per parcels post from the docks are well worthy of being tried.

When we have secured our fish there are one or two points we must bear in mind with regard to it, points that are sadly too often forgotten.

One is that just as a ripe peach or pear suffers by rough handling, so does a sole, or whatever other fish we touch; it may not seem to matter much, but the fact remains; its flavour will tell a tale. Then much washing, or packing with ice is very injurious; fish ought not properly to see water until it is being prepared for the table, and then only long enough to allow of its thorough cleansing. Never let any but fresh-water fish lie in water.

Skinned fish will have a very different flavour from that which is cooked with the skin left on. Take a fried or boiled whiting for an example and test it.

French cooks are far more clever in their treatment of fish, especially of the commoner and cheaper kinds, than we are; they say "*c'est la sauce qui fait manger le poisson*," and accordingly are at the trouble to prepare the most cunning sauces with which to make the dish palatable. It is in these *petits soins* that our English cookery is so faulty; if we are given a salmon or a turbot we know we shall do well, but the "small fry" is not worth troubling about.

What we want to find at this present moment are some of those dishes that shall be worthy of the epicure's praise, yet not costly, nutritive, yet so easily obtainable that no one need say they are beyond her means. To this end we will leave salmon, turbot and soles alone; they are only available on exceptional occasions for such as have small means.

Let us begin with one of the cheapest and homeliest of fish, namely plaice. We are all familiar with plaice that has been filleted, rolled in egg and bread-crumbs and fried; is there another way?

Let us take these fillets—we have four strips, but if the fish was large these strips would admit of being cut in half, so as to make eight pieces. Sprinkle each fillet or piece with pepper and salt, roll up and tie with thick white thread. Place the rolls in an enamelled soup-plate (or an old china one) and cover with another. Set this in a moderate oven and let the fish cook in its own juice for twenty minutes or half an hour. Then drain away all the liquor which will have run from them, keeping the fish covered.

Dissolve an ounce of salt butter in a saucepan, stir in as much flour until it is smooth, then add the fish liquor and three-penny worth of cream; stir vigorously over the fire until it boils and is quite smooth, then add a few drops of lemon juice, a pinch of pepper, and pour into the middle of a round dish that is made very hot. Set the rolls of fish on this sauce after removing the thread, and on the top of each roll put a tiny pat of butter with which a little freshly chopped parsley has been mixed. You may make a border of tiny fried *croûtons* of bread around this, or of fine mashed potato, if liked.

Very large and thick plaice are nice left whole and either baked with butter or boiled and served with anchovy or caper sauce.

For filleting and frying I prefer fresh haddock to plaice; the fillets are thicker, firmer, and have more flavour. The cost of both is about the same.

Fresh Haddocks are very nice also if turned round, the tail in the mouth, a little dissolved butter poured over them, sprinkling them with chopped parsley, pepper and salt, and baking them in a brisk oven. Set the fish on a hot dish, add a little lemon juice or a spoonful of capers to the butter in the pan and pour it over the haddock.

Another cheap fish is the *Herring*, but it is often objected to because of the bones. If, however, after splitting open and cleansing it, the herring be held in the left hand, and with the thumb and finger of the right the bone is pressed backwards, it may afterwards be drawn away quite easily. Dissolve a little fresh butter, pass the inside of the herring through it, and sprinkle with salt and pepper, then roll up from the head, the skin outwards, tie securely, flour each roll, and then fry for a few minutes in boiling fat. Drain well before dishing them, that all fat may run away. Serve with these *Robert Sauce*, made in this wise:

Fry a slice of Spanish onion that has been cut into dice, until it is thoroughly cooked, then mix with it a teaspoonful of flour, a dessertspoonful of mushroom ketchup, half a teaspoonful of anchovy sauce, a pinch of cayenne, a little made mustard, salt, a few drops of vinegar, and about a teacupful of brown stock. Boil until smooth.

Suppose that we have a tail piece of *Cod*. As this also is a cheap cut, it will not be much if boiled, nor will it be much liked if baked. Let us cut it sharply across into as many slices of an inch thick as it will make, dividing the larger slices again, that the pieces may be

as much of a size as may be. Lay these in a stewpan with a little salt butter and stew them very gently until tender through.

In the meantime make a *Curry Sauce* by frizzling a small piece of onion in an ounce of butter, then stirring in a teaspoonful of curry paste or powder, a pinch of salt, a dessertspoonful of tomato sauce, a teaspoonful of flour, and a cupful of clear stock. When these have boiled, stir in half a teacupful of cream. Pour this over the fish in the stewpan and let all simmer together for a few minutes, then serve in a hot dish with some well-boiled rice in another one.

Stewed Fish.—So popular a dish with Jewish people, is not frequently seen on English tables. For this purpose cod lends itself admirably, so does halibut, and so do fresh haddock. Divide the fish neatly, but do not flour it, sprinkle a little pepper and salt over it, and add butter with sufficient milk or water to keep the fish moist, then cover tightly and cook gently until tender. Thicken the liquor in the stewpan after taking the fish out, add any flavouring liked, also a few slices of lemon, then the yolks of one or two eggs. Bring the sauce up to boiling-point and pour around the fish.

A *Salad* made from cold fish of any kind, broken into neat flakes after all skin and bone has been removed, then some slices of hard-boiled egg added, with a few strips of chopped pickled gherkins, and a mayonnaise or salad cream poured over, is another good way of presenting fish.

A *Fish Pie*.—The fish divided into fillets and a few picked shrimps or one or two oysters introduced with the seasoning, and a few bits of butter, then a little milk poured into the dish, and finally an inch deep crust of mashed potatoes put on, with about three-quarters of an hour's baking in a brisk oven, will present a dish that is fit for any table, light and nutritious either for children or invalids.

For a nice supper dish try the following mould of *Jellied Fish*.—Remove all the skin and bone from about two pounds of cod or halibut; cut it into small pieces and mix with it a teaspoonful of salt, the juice of a fresh lemon, a teaspoonful of grated onion, a pinch of cayenne, a teaspoonful of desiccated cocoanut, and a teacupful of water. Press all into a mould, cover tightly, and steam for at least one hour. Set the mould on ice when cold, and when required for table stand it for half a minute in hot water, then turn out on to a pretty china dish, pour a little mayonnaise dressing or seasoned cream over the top and garnish with the crisp leaves from the heart of a lettuce.

When making fish cakes or croquettes, mix an equal quantity of mashed potato with the flaked fish, and use a little milk to make the mixture moist, as well as a spoonful of sharp sauce—anchovy by preference to give piquancy. If any melted butter or sauce remains over after the dish came away from table, use that in preference to anything else.

Tinned lobster or salmon makes excellent cutlets in the case of emergency, using potato again as the binding medium in preference to bread. Tinned fish is not, however, so good from a nutritive point of view.

With a dish of cold-dressed fish a lettuce or watercress salad becomes an admirable accompaniment; salad should also accompany a dish of salmon cutlets, but for garnishing use fried parsley, and with fresh fish that has been filleted and fried use fried parsley and cut lemons.

Brown bread-and-butter, not potato, should accompany fried fresh fish.

LUCY H. YATES.

make them up and be none the worse for them."

This reminded me of the old saying, "The falling out of faithful friends, renewal is of love." So I let the pair alone, and when their chicks were hatched, they became most attentive parents, and brought up a brood of five, all of whom are fine birds. One thing, however, I must point out. If the two birds show complete indifference to each other and appear to be morose and miserable, keeping at different parts of the cage, then separate them and let them choose other mates.

When birds are sitting, keep them plentifully supplied with water for drinking and bathing, as it is not well that they should bathe in their drinking water, which they will do if none other is provided.

Keep the cage scrupulously clean, but do not interfere with the nest, nor attempt to wash the birds. Let them have their own way, feed them well, and leave the rest to nature.

And now I come to a most important matter, and that is the food to be given them at these times. There are many and various theories upon the matter; but I have found the following the best recipe:

Take one dessert-spoonful of rape seed and simmer it in water for six minutes, one egg boiled hard (it need not be a new-laid egg), three Swiss biscuits. Pound the whole together in a mortar. This will be sufficient for four days for a couple of birds after the young ones are hatched. The parent birds must, of course, have their usual food in addition, and perhaps a little watercress. One thing is very important. The egg-food must not be allowed to get sour, or it will kill the young birds. Perhaps more are lost by this than by any other means. Let me advise

our girls always to mix this food and give it themselves to the birds.

The bird sits thirteen days; but do not remove the unhatched eggs for three or four days later, because, of course, the eggs are not all laid on the same day, and the later eggs may require a longer time. When the female leaves the nest, which she does about three times a day, the male bird generally takes her place and sits on the eggs, but this is not always the case. The two should not be allowed to sit on the eggs together. If this is attempted the male bird should be driven off.

Some writers advise that the first egg should be placed in bran until all are laid, and an imitation egg placed in the nest. But this I have not found necessary.

Although I am very fond of canaries, I cannot say that they are pretty when first hatched. In fact, for four or five days, they are repulsive objects, consisting of a beak, a long scraggy neck and a raw-looking body covered with a kind of down, looking like mildew, which gives them the appearance of very old wizen little men. After a few days, however, they begin to be pretty. Remember both parents feed the young.

The small birds will leave the nest on their own account after about a fortnight when they are strong enough to get on to the perches. If you find the mother begins to peck them or pull out their feathers, you must remove them into a different cage, as this is a sign that the hen wants to lay again and rebuild her nest. Before she is allowed to do this, clean out the cage and wash the nest basin.

Sometimes the parent birds are a little exhausted after bringing up a brood, and should be fed and attended to with extra care, especially when they have brought up three broods in the same season.

I remember two charming canaries I once had, and I will tell you their tragic history. They were named "Yellerino" and "Stiggerepino." These two little creatures were an attached couple. They selected each other, and were inseparable. We thought the little female bird delicate, and chose another mate for Yellerino; but he would not look at her, and seemed to pine for his first love. So we allowed them to come together again.

They hatched and brought up four nice little birds; but the female became so weak afterwards that he used to feed her and tend her most gently. It was, however, no use, for, after a few days, she fell off the perch dead.

We thereupon removed poor little Yellerino into another cage with companions to cheer him; but day after day he would stand upon a perch looking out with such a longing look—sometimes singing very plaintively, but generally silent. Always so gentle, he would come on to my hand and look up into my face as if he would ask what had become of his mate. He got thinner and thinner until one day when I put my hand into the cage he laid his little head on my hand and gently passed away.

What I have here written is the result of my own experience of canaries. I have simply related what has happened to birds which I have kept or reared, sixty of whom are alive and many of them singing lustily at this moment. I have no theories to advance, or methods to advocate, neither have I given much time to the study of bird literature. In fact, my birds are simply my amusement with which I beguile my spare hours in a life which is occupied by the calls of a very large though, I thank God, an obedient and affectionate family.

WHAT TO COOK, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

PART V.

MILK, EGG COOKERY, BUTTER, SUET, LARD, ETC.

"Trifles forgot, to serious mischief lead."



Do not appreciate the real value of milk, we must regard it as a food, not drink. Though we drink it from a cup or tumbler, as soon as it reaches the stomach it becomes a solid, and the process of digestion quickly separates its component parts, one-third only of which being water is readily absorbed into the system.

As fully two-thirds of the components of milk are solids, we should bear in mind that the drinking of milk by children does not lessen their need for water wherewith to quench natural thirst. Babies and very young children often suffer acutely for want of a draught of water—nurses supposing that the child's supply of fluid food had been ample when its "bottle" was emptied.

Why milk is pre-eminently the food of the young of all species is because it is itself a

type, in the most easily digestible form, of all foods. It contains all the essentials for growth of muscle, nerve, bone and tissue; hence for adults also, when the digestive powers have become weakened from any cause, milk establishes itself as a perfect food.

The process of sterilising milk as we obtain it at some dairies is rather a process preventive of disease than one touching digestion, although many people put faith in it. Sterilised milk may be safely taken when going on a journey, and, indeed, if the milk is liable to be carried far, it is well to use home sterilisation—or scalding—as well.

The addition of a tablespoonful of lime-water to a pint of milk is invaluable for delicate children and invalids; soda-water, again, is an improvement when milk is taken as a beverage by adults or by children.

A tumblerful of milk brought up almost to boiling-point and drunk at once is an excellent restorative after great exertion or exposure. The same, either with or without the addition of a tablespoonful of stimulant, is an excellent specific for colds in the head. It should be taken just before getting into bed.

A pinch of powdered borax stirred into milk and cream will prevent them turning sour for several days. Borax is the charm on which the purveyors of cream as sold in little brown stone-ware jugs rely; the cream in these may be trusted to keep, when unopened, for a month without its turning sour.

Milk baked in a stone jar in the oven for an hour becomes much enriched, tasting indeed like cream. It makes a better supper

for children than if simply boiled. If, however, in addition to baking it, a handful of Scotch oatmeal be put into the jar, the result is even more satisfactory.

Milk that has become stale or clotted has by no means lost its virtues. It is a shame to waste even a single spoonful of good milk.

To make good *Scones*, it is necessary that the milk be decidedly "lobbered," to use an Americanism. When so, a half-teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda well stirred in will quickly make it froth, and the scones made from this will be sure to be light. It is essential to make scones and cakes well that the milk shall be of thoroughly good quality—if poor, they will be tough and flavourless.

Supposing that the milk which has turned sour is also thin and poor, it may be turned to good account as a cleanser. For washing and impating a polish to floorcloths and linoleums there are few things better than milk. Milk will wash out ink-stains on cotton or linen goods, and will even clean paint.

The whey of sour milk is one of the best things for dabbing on the face and hands when they are red and hot from exposure to sun and wind with boating, tennis, etc. Sun freckles can be removed by making flower of sulphur into a paste with sour milk and spreading it over the face at bed-time; wash off in soft rain water the next morning, and, if persevered in, this treatment will beautify the skin as well as remove disfigurements.

A glass of new milk at bed-time, taken regularly, between the ages of twelve and fourteen, will cause a child to grow almost twice as fast as without it.

Next to milk, the most readily digestible article of diet we can have is an *Egg*.

As the nutritive quality of an egg depends partly on its freshness and partly upon the kind of egg, it follows that we do not economise truly when we buy foreign or "cooking" eggs. One large, well-flavoured home-grown egg is worth three foreign ones, even when its worth is going to be partly hidden in a pudding.

Whipping the whites is a sure test of the quality of an egg used for cookery, as poaching proves the freshness of one that is intended for eating. Only a fresh egg will whip well as only the freshest will poach well.

In making buttered, scalloped, or fricasseed eggs, we may disguise their staleness somewhat; but there will be no comparison in the flavour when our dish is to be eaten of. An omelette again can only be made well from the best eggs.

Hence we see that it is not possible to content ourselves with subtleties when we come to natural products. The best are the cheapest in the end.

Eggs are most easily digested when eaten uncooked. Next to this, however, we might place one lightly poached, as in poaching some of the sulphur has an opportunity of escaping, and it is usually the sulphur in it which causes a boiled egg to disagree with some people.

When boiled, however, we must carefully adhere to either one of two extremes; that is the underdone stage, when three minutes and a half is an ample allowance of time, or ten minutes, which is sufficient to render the egg mealy like a potato. Between these we have the "leathery" stage, when indigestion is deliberately courted. Crack the shell as soon as the egg is taken out of the water in order that the sulphury odour may escape a little.

There is perhaps no nicer way of serving a dish of eggs for luncheon or supper—when the flavour of curry is liked—than *Curried à l'Indienne*.

Boil four or five fresh eggs for ten minutes, then throw them into cold water; when cool crack and peel off the shells. Cut each egg in half or, if large, into quarters. Make a rich sauce by adding to a breakfast-cupful of broth or stock, a dessertspoonful of cornflour, the same of tomato ketchup, a small teaspoonful of curry powder or paste, a pinch of salt, an ounce of butter, and a teaspoonful of grated onion. Boil these together for five minutes, and, if the sauce is not sharp enough, add to it a small spoonful of chutney. Pour into a dish, and set the quartered eggs carefully in the sauce, cover closely and leave in a warm place for a few minutes, then serve with well-boiled rice in a companion dish.

An *Omelette* not only tests the quality of the eggs used, but it also tests the capabilities of the maker, more severely even than the usual "boiled potato." But when satisfactorily achieved there are few things which give more pleasure in the eating; and, as we can add so many ingredients to give piquancy and variety, it is well worth while appreciating oneself to the art of omelette making.

The pan, to begin with, should be one of medium size, neither large nor small, as four eggs makes an omelette amply big enough for

two or three people, and one of six eggs is as much as can be managed at once. A black or galvanised-iron pan is the best to use, and it should be one kept strictly for this purpose and no other. Do not wash it after using, but wipe thoroughly inside and out with clean kitchen paper.

A good ounce of fresh butter will be needed, and, while this dissolves, break the eggs on to a plate, add to them just a table-spoonful of milk, a liberal pinch of salt and pepper, and a teaspoonful of minced parsley. Beat briskly with the blade of a knife, and pour at once into the frothing butter. Stir from the sides to the middle until the omelette shows signs of "setting," then leave it alone for a minute. When it begins to rise, set the pan in a brisk oven, or under the "toaster" of the gas; this will draw up the top and also enable you to slip the whole more easily out of the pan. Directly the surface is the least bit brown, fold over the omelette and serve without a moment's loss of time.

It is at this stage that you would introduce frizzled mushrooms, or kidney and bacon, chopped ham, tomatoes, etc.—all, of course, previously cooked—into the middle of the omelette.

The point of skill which it is desirable to reach is that of cooking the omelette quickly and just sufficiently, but not one second too much, as then we get to the stage when it becomes leathery. Quickness, deftness, and speed in serving are the other essentials.

Buttered eggs are more easily managed by the unskilled cook, and these again may be varied by adding a drop or two of anchovy sauce, or a chopped chili, a spoonful of minced cooked bacon, etc. The mode of making buttered eggs has been given several times in these pages.

To use up eggs which have been boiled for the table and not eaten, one of the best modes would be to shell them, cut them in half, take out the yolks, add to them a spoonful of shrimp paste, a drop of sharp sauce, a pinch of cayenne, and a little salt, with a few fresh breadcrumbs. Fill up the cavity of the whites with this mixture, and place each half on a tiny square of buttered toast, setting them in the oven or underneath the "toaster" for a couple of minutes.

Butter, Suet, Lard, etc.—The pre-eminence of butter over all other fats is due to the fact that it is relatively more nutritious as well as being more palatable, for in butter we have the best constituents of milk in a partly digested form.

Butter is so valuable in the nursery that to curtail it there is to rob the children of one of their first aids to health. A child who dislikes any other form of fat will often eat butter greedily; if so, it is Nature herself who is recouping herself for an outlay that is not repaid otherwise. A child that shows strong repugnance to fat in any other form ought to be carefully watched; a tendency to chest disease and consumption will be there, and without fat the nerves will be insufficiently clothed and nourished.

More robust children would be equally benefited by having good beef dripping to

spread on their bread; but, in any case, let them have fat in some form. It is not fattening, but makes energy, generates warmth, and helps to repair muscular waste.

Where there is no need for the so-called "economy," mistaken mothers and nurses are fond of giving jam, treacle, or honey, to children as a substitute for butter. "They like it, and it is cheaper." In the end it is considerably dearer however. Give them jam or honey on occasion by all means; but do not deprive them of butter. This is one of those cases where the "trifle forgot" does indeed "to serious mischief lead."

It matters not so much in what form fat is taken, so that it is taken, as we soon find it has to be taken medicinally when the natural mode of assimilating it falls short.

Students and people who have sedentary occupations, have often to be induced to take in other forms the fat that, in its natural shape, they would leave on their plates. One of the easiest ways of doing this is to serve the fat in puddings or in a simple cake; and a light suet pudding, nicely made and cooked, is hardly surpassed by any other. Its flavour may be varied *ad infinitum* by the addition of fruit, spices, etc., or, if plain, it may have a meat gravy to make it savoury.

The secret of making a light suet pudding is to rub well together half as much minced suet as flour, with salt, and a pinch of baking-powder will be an improvement. Mix to a stiff dough with water or milk, and then knead it like bread dough for a few minutes. Place in a greased mould, or tie loosely in a cloth, then drop into boiling water and keep it fast boiling all the time it is cooking.

Rendered beef suet makes the best fat for most frying purposes, as it is free from the objectionable odour which often accompanies lard or mutton fat.

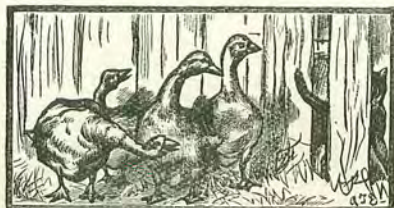
For a beef-steak pudding or pie, a suet crust is essential and most suitable. For lighter pastry lard is perhaps the most suitable of all "shortening" materials. For plain pastry to be eaten the same day at the family table, beef dripping is admirable, but it quickly grows soft. For pastry that is required to be kept in stock, butter is preferable, especially if the pastry will be reheated.

Lard and butter together make an excellent "puff" pastry, also they will do excellently well for dough and other plain cakes. Good luncheon cake can be made with clarified dripping; but the best cakes demand butter only.

Oil is a form of fat that finds greater favour abroad than in England. Frying in oil is in some respects a more difficult process than frying in any other kind of fat. Oil expands as it grows hot, and allowance must be made for this, otherwise the lighter kinds of *frittura* and fish generally taste and look better when fried in the oil medium. Next to oil, for these, comes lard.

It is well to cultivate a taste for oil as an ingredient of salad dressing, as by this means a beneficial quantity can be easily taken, even by the most fanciful. And, after all, it is surely easier to take olive oil on a crisp lettuce leaf than to take the nauseous spoonful of "cod liver" out of the dreaded bottle.

L. H. YATES.



WHAT TO COOK, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

PART VI.

THE STAFF OF LIFE. SOME CAKES AND A FEW BISCUITS.



HE making of bread—or the care of it—comes as part of the daily routine of every-day life, it is literally daily bread. We have to consider not merely its manner of making and baking, but the kind of bread which best

proves our staff of life. Undoubtedly the fine white bread on the baker's shelf, especially that which has been baked in a tin, is not this; the best constituents of the flour have been eliminated that appearances, or that taste which approves the appearance of whiteness, may be satisfied.

The flour for making a white loaf that shall be wholesome while yet it is white, should be of a yellowish tinge, rather granulated, and one that does not hold together. This makes a strong and elastic dough. The most wholesome flour for family use is undoubtedly pure wholemeal, but if thought too brown it may be mixed with an equal quantity of white flour.

Of the brands of patent wholemeal bread with which we are all familiar there is much to be said in praise. Malt and cereals of different kinds are included with the wholemeal flour, all of which are nutritious; this kind of bread cannot be so well made at home.

Next to the importance of carefully choosing flour, and purchasing it from a miller, not from a baker, comes the selection of a reliable brand of yeast, German in preference to brewers' barm. It must be perfectly sweet even if not perfectly fresh, although freshness is a desideratum likewise. There are many makes of German yeast but few that surpass the "D. C. L." brand.

Sweetness and lightness, but not puffiness, are the points to achieve in making a good loaf; a fairly quick oven is essential too; it is well to test the heat by a thermometer. For square or round quarter or half-quarter loaves 360° Fah. would be right; for fancy bread, rolls, or long French loaves and cakes about 400°.

If milk is used for mixing the dough it should be first scalded then cooled; if milk and water, pour boiling water into the milk; if water only boil it first, then use it when it has cooled to the right temperature.

To set the "sponge" is the first proceeding after the flour is weighed out and a "well" has been made in the centre. Two ounces of good yeast will be sufficient to raise six pounds of flour; make a thick cream of the yeast first by mixing it with warm milk and water; a teaspoonful of sugar is useful at this stage. Set the yeast at the back of the stove to rise for a few minutes. As soon as it is properly working mix it with enough of the flour in the "well" to make a thick batter, then leave to rise again for about ten minutes. By this time the mixing and kneading of the whole mass may be begun. Kneading is the most important part of the whole process of bread-making. In large bakeries this is done by machinery and done far better than by hand; perhaps we may yet see the same or a similar invention brought out on a scale small enough to make it practicable for a family baking.

The right consistency of the dough is only obtained by practice, but when the kneading process is finished the ball should be firm

and elastic, not sticking to the hands or to the pan.

Cover with a soft cloth and set to rise in a temperate place, free from draughts. The bread which is put to rise at eight o'clock in the morning ought to be ready for the oven by twelve. It should by then be about double its original bulk. If it becomes over light it will ferment, and the bread will be sour. For this reason it is not advisable in small households to knead the dough over night; the long, even if slow rising will take the nourishment and sweetness from the flour.

Salt is best added with the water or milk, as it becomes more evenly distributed by this means.

Wholemeal flour will take rather more yeast, more salt, and more water than white flour; it must be more lightly handled also and baked quickly at first, afterwards slowly.

Do not knead the dough again a second time when on the rolling board, but shape it to the form required; place in greased tins or on well-floured baking-sheets and put in the oven at once.

A fair sized loaf of either brown or white bread—say of two or three pounds weight—will take the best part of an hour's baking.

For fancy bread take a small quantity of flour, say two pounds, and add to it an ounce of yeast mixed to a cream, an ounce of dissolved butter, the whole of an egg lightly beaten and sufficient warm salted milk to make a soft dough. Beat rather than knead this, until it is full of air. Let it rise, then take off small pieces of the dough, pull or shape them as desired, brush over with milk or dissolved lard, and bake in a very quick oven to a decided brown.

Bread-sticks or pieces of light dough pulled out very thin and brushed over with water, are preferred by those who suffer much from indigestion and are unable to take bread in the ordinary form.

When buttermilk is used for mixing bread it is well to add a little soda to it, and use baking-powder in preference to yeast.

Some of the best of our modern cooks are not advocates for much cake-making at home. Except for the plainer kinds such as lunch, seed, or rice cakes, it too often means a conglomeration of rich stuffs that are harmful rather than beneficial, and costly into the bargain.

With so many substitutes for butter and eggs one is naturally mistrustful as to the composition of factory-made cakes, yet as far as lightness and good baking is concerned these are more to be depended upon. There is no cake so wholesome as that which is made from a portion of the bread dough, to which good stoned raisins, shred peel and sugar with a small but sufficient quantity of wholesome dripping or butter have been added and worked in. This, when well-baked, will harm no one, and it may benefit many.

For afternoon tea, small cakes approaching the biscuit order are always better liked; for an invalid or for a children's festivity a home-made rice cake is excellent.

A Hungarian tea loaf is another of the "sweet and light" sort that deserves high recommendation, and then we have crisp biscuits that are the delight of all. Let us specialise on a few of these.

A word first as to the order that should be followed in the mixing of a cake, as upon the right way of mixing success will depend.

Briefly then—

1. Beat together the butter and sugar until they make a cream.
2. Add the well whisked eggs.
3. Add the flour gradually, beating all the time.

4. Add fruit or whatever flavouring is given to the cake.

When baking-powder is put in it must be rubbed into the flour; if soda, it should be dissolved in lemon juice or milk and stirred in last.

The oven door should not be opened too frequently after the cake has been put in; and if either top or bottom heat seems too fierce shield with paper or an inverted tin.

American Stars are pretty and wholesome little cakes for afternoon tea. Beat together a quarter of a pound of castor sugar and the same weight of butter, then add the whisked yolks of four eggs with a teaspoonful of grated lemon rind, and half a wineglassful of orange flower water. Beat in six ounces of dried and sifted flour, and lastly stir in briskly the whisked whites of the eggs; beat all together for ten minutes, then pour into an inch deep baking tin that has been previously greased, let the mixture three parts fill it. Bake rather quickly to a pale brown, when done cut into stars or diamonds and ice the top of each with pink or white soft sugar icing.

Almond Biscuits.—Half a pound of pounded loaf sugar, half a pound of sifted flour and half a pound of fresh butter, two ounces of ground almonds and a few drops of essence, with two yolks of eggs.

Rub the flour, butter, sugar and almonds together first, then mix with the eggs into which the essence has been put. Make into a stiff paste and roll out on a floured board into a thin sheet, stamp out and lay on a baking tin and bake in a rather slow oven to a pale brown.

Cocoanut Macaroons.—Mix together a quarter of a pound of desiccated cocoanut and the same weight of powdered sugar, make into a paste with the whites of four well-whisked eggs and a few drops of fresh lemon juice. Drop in small pieces on to a buttered tin and bake in a brisk oven for twenty minutes. When cold store them in an air-tight canister.

For those who are fond of the nut *Chestnut Cones* will be a welcome dainty.

Boil, peel and pound half a pound of chestnuts, add three ounces of flour, two ounces of dissolved butter and two beaten eggs, a drop of vanilla essence if liked; roll into the shape of walnuts, brush them over with beaten egg, and bake in a quick oven to a good rich brown. Let them cool on a sieve.

The following is an excellent recipe for a superlative *Rice Cake*.

Rub together four ounces of dried flour and eight ounces of rice flour. Beat together to a cream eight ounces of butter, eight ounces of castor sugar and the juice of half a fresh lemon with the rind grated. Add the eggs to the butter after whisking the whites and yolks separately; beat in by degrees the flour, then at the last stir in half a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a tablespoonful of milk; beat all briskly together for ten minutes, then pour into a mould that is lined with buttered paper, and bake in an oven that is not too hot for upwards of an hour. Rest the cake carefully on end or on a sieve to cool.

Stale bread and cakes may be made quite fresh again by gradually heating them through in a moderate oven. If the bread is very dry outside brush it over with water or milk before putting into the oven.

A folded linen cloth is better to lay over bread than a tight-fitting cover.

Finally, do not waste bread, for all crusts and scraps can be baked dry and crushed to a powder for raspings; and the better pieces of bread will make puddings, and if pulled and baked will eat with cheese.

L. H. YATES.