It was a very low voice which answered, "Three times."

"I am ashamed of you, Tom. Your master and I have trusted you so fully, and, for the sake of a rich young lady's tips, you have in a way robbed Miss Hope of the pleasure Miss Mabel planned for her when she sent Lucy Grey to Wrayford. You, that your master picked from amongst all the lads in the village, because he believed in you. How long is it since you came here?"

"Eight years. I was fourteen when I came, and I've never had as much said to me before in the way of being found fault with," replied Tom, with a suspicious trembling of the voice.

"I don't believe you ever deserved it before, and that is saying a good deal, Tom. Tell me, what made you act in this mean way about the mare?"

Tom Greig could almost have fallen at his mistress's feet when she spoke so kindly of his past years of service, and her softened tone emboldened him to look up and, as he would have said, "to own up" also.

"I've been saving up for a good while, I think you know, ma'am, what for, and every sovereign takes some scraping together when one has had to help the old folks a bit."

"And you thought each piece of gold that you got so easily from Miss Elce brought you a step nearer to a cottage of your own with Rosa Bent for its mistress."

Tom assented and added, "I'm very sorry. I hope you'll look over things this time, and as to the money, I'd better give it back to the lady."

Mrs. Fraser considered a moment and decided that Tom could not return the gold without giving some reason for so doing. Moreover, she felt that Miss Elce deserved no favour in the matter, and would never miss the money.

Tom must not get off scot-free with the spoils of wrong-doing, so his mistress decreed that, instead of adding the three pounds to his savings, he should hand two of them to his mother. Then, in consideration of past faithful service and present full confession, he should hear no more of the matter.

Tom went off with a light heart and speedily lightened his pocket also, to the amazement of his mother, who told Mrs. Fraser a day or two later that no other parent ever had such a good son as her Tom. She only wished he would let her tell the mistress how much he'd done for her.

When Mrs. Fraser went to the stables in order to call Tom Greig to account, she left Nellie Hope alone. For once the girl was feeling a little bit out of everything. After a few minutes' thought, she went in search of the two little ones, Malcolm and Alice, aged respectively six and four years, with whom she was a prime favourite. But even the children were out of reach, having gone with their attendant for a drive in their little donkey chaise.

Nellie knew that her hostess wanted to answer a number of letters, so as soon as they met she announced her intention of going for a solitary walk.

"I shall most likely meet the children," she said.

"And trudge home beside their steed?"

"Perhaps so, but believe me, I shall be quite happy."

"I do believe you; but all the same, I am very angry at your being tricked out of Lucy Grey. It will not happen again. I have taken care against that," and Mrs. Fraser retreated to her sanctum.

Nellie was not sorry that she could look forward to having a modest share in what had been intended for her sole use and benefit, but she would not allow herself to dwell too much on the selfishness that had robbed her of all, thus far.

The country was looking lovely. The leaves were just beginning to put on new and richer shades of colour. Robins had begun their bold song, and here and there the harvesters were still hard at work clearing the fields of their golden treasures.

Nellie, ever observant, allowed her eyes to feast on all the beauty that was spread around and above her, and thanked God for it. She was crossing a wide pasture by a path which cut off a great sweep of road, when she overtook an old country-woman, who had seated herself on a green bank to rest. The old body's face was pale and covered with great beads of moisture, but she looked up at Nellie with a pleasant smile and bade her "good day."

The girl noticed the sweet expression on the kind old face as well as its utter weariness.

"I am afraid you have over-tired yourself," she said. "This large parcel has been too heavy a load for you. Have you much farther to go?"

"Better than a mile, but it will be mostly across fields, and not so hot as the dusty road. My folks are busy in the field. They reckon to get the last sheaves under cover to-day, and a good thing too, for the weather is going to break, they say. Some things were wanted from the town, and I went by an early train for them. I thought I could manage, but we are three miles from the station, and it's a long walk back with things to carry. I managed well enough going, but I felt spent and had to sit down. You see I'm not so young as I was. I didn't eat much either this morning, being rather hurried, and trains won't wait."

"You must rest," said Nellie, "and see, I have something which may do you good."

Lunch was to be later than usual at Wrayford that day, and Mrs. Fraser had insisted that Nellie should take some daintily cut sandwiches, and a little milk, when she started on her walk.

The old woman did not need much pressing to share the simple meal, and Nellie was soon delighted to see the colour return to the kindly face.

The pair sat side by side, until the old woman said she must be moving on, and was about to take up her parcel. But Nelly held it under one arm, and bade her new acquaintance take the other.

"You need not hesitate," she said. "I am young and strong; the weight is nothing to me, though it is far too much for you, and I mean to see you safe home."

"Eh, but you mustn't. That would take you a mile and more out of your way, and then there's the going back. I reckon you'll be staying at Wrayford, for you don't belong hereabouts, and what a walk it will be for you. There'll be nobody to give you a lift. All the traps have gone to market, unless the men are busy finishing harvest, and it comes to the same thing, for the horses are at work too."

Nellie laughed at the idea of weariness, and at the suggestion that she needed a lift by the way.

"I am so glad I overtook you," she said. "I was alone, and I wanted somebody to talk to. I should have walked as far, and the way seems so much shorter when one has company."

"I'm sure you mean it, my dear young lady," said the old woman, "and I—well I can't tell you how thankful I am for your help. When you came up to me, I was feeling as if all the life was going out of me. I believe I should have just sat on and on, and I hardly like to think what might have been the end."

(*To be continued.*)

INVALID COOKERY.

PART I.

"How sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself! He is his own exclusive object. He makes the most of himself. . . He is his own sympathiser, and instinctively feels that none can so well perform that office for him. . . Only that punctual face of the old nurse pleaseth him that announces his broths and his cordials." So wrote Elia seventy years ago, quaintly commenting on the selfishness of the sick, which he, gentle and considerate though he was, could understand so well. Did Bridget Elia make those broths and cordials? Whoever did so must have been a good cook, for, to an invalid, food seems so intolerable unless well prepared and daintily served. "The *punctual* face of the old nurse." That is another point in her favour, although the old woman whose name we do not know had probably never seen the inside of a hospital, and certainly did not belong to the British Nurses' Association. Food should *always* be given punctually to an invalid. This is most important. It is bad for anyone to eat irregularly. Our digestions are intended to do their work at certain times, and if work is put upon them at other times, they do it fitfully like other ill-treated servants—sometimes, in fact, they will not do it at all. How much more is this the case when we are ill, and all that complex internal machinery is out of order? The invalid, with the petulance of his kind, may absolutely and finally refuse to take any food whatsoever at any time, and yet when the usual eating time (scarcely a meal) comes round, how injured is the demeanour of that invalid! And when the food comes (ten minutes later than usual) it requires more than usual tact on the part of the nurse to get it taken.

Did anybody ever think of writing a handbook of directions to invalids? I once had a remark of the late Sir William Gull's quoted to me when I was "lying in state and feeling my sovreignty," to quote Elia once more. It was to the effect that the patient should help the nurse and doctor in every way possible. I have no doubt I richly deserved the hint, but I did not particularly relish it; so perhaps a whole work on the subject would be wasted labour.

All nurses—hospital-trained or home-trained—should have some knowledge of cookery. In isolation cases a knowledge of this kind is most useful. No one knows under what circumstances it may be required. You may have to nurse someone in some little country inn or in inconvenient lodgings, far away from ordinary home comforts. Let me begin with a few general hints on sick-room cookery.

Firstly, then, there is a difference between cookery for the sick and cookery for the convalescent. In the former case the "machinery" alluded to before is thoroughly out of order and can only do very slight work,

often only just enough to keep the vital functions going at all, and as a consequence the waste of the body is not repaired day by day as it is in health, and so long illnesses leave extreme attenuation and debility. During convalescence, however, the digestive machinery is already stronger, and *can* and *ought* to do more work to repair the ravages wrought by illness on the frame of the sufferer. For this reason it is such a mistake to feed a convalescent on the broths or beef-teas which were so invaluable during the crisis of the disease. Beef-tea, for instance, is principally a stimulant—more of a stimulant than a food; at any rate, it acts on the frame more as wine or medicine does. It is a splendid stimulant, containing very valuable juices — albumen, creatin, creatinime, and others which it is needless to enumerate. During wasting illness beef-tea and similar broths may keep the frame alive, but in convalescence more is needed, as the ravages caused by sickness must now be gradually repaired, and solid nourishing food is ordered which yet must be light and easily digestible.

Let us first consider food for the sick. In all fever cases this consists almost entirely of liquids or semi-liquids. The great aim when making beef-tea should be to extract the stimulating juices named. This can only be done by slow cooking. On no account let it boil. If it boils, gelatine is extracted which is *not* useful, but the albumen is hardened, and not only does not come out itself but prevents the other stimulating juices from doing so. Albumen is a substance similar to white of egg and helps to form flesh. As a general rule all fat should be removed from beef-tea. The only exception is in cases of lung disease, when as much as possible is given to the patient. In cases of great weakness raw beef-tea is often given, the juices of the meat being more easily digested uncooked.

Do not on any account tell the patient that the beef-tea is raw, but give it in a covered cup or a coloured glass. The taste of the two is so very similar that the difference cannot be detected. Never strain beef-tea, but pour it off against the lid of the jar in which it was made. Straining removes the brown particles which are the most valuable part; for the same reason it should always be stirred before it is given. If beef-tea is wanted in a great hurry, it can be made quickly and yet slowly as far as the cooking is concerned, for it must still only simmer. Here are three recipes for beef-tea:—

Ordinary Beef-Tea.—1 lb. of rump steak or shin, 1 pint of water, three or four drops of lemon juice, a little salt. Scrape the meat finely, removing all skin and as much fat as possible. Good beef being flecked with fat it is not possible to remove all before cooking. Put the meat into a jar with the water, salt and lemon, and let it stand with the lid on for two hours. Then put the jar into a slow oven and let it gently cook for three hours, stirring from time to time. When done, stir up and pour off against the lid. Remove all fat with a piece of soft paper. The lemon juice helps to draw out the juices.

Raw Beef-Tea.—Take the same proportion of meat and water. Prepare in the same way, and let it stand in a covered basin or jar for two hours. Raw beef-tea will not keep long.

Quick Beef-Tea.—The same proportions as before. Cut the meat up as small as the time will allow you to do, and then let it stand in the water for twenty minutes. Just heat through in a saucepan, squeezing the meat against the sides with a spoon to get out the juices quickly. The proportions of meat and water given above are quite strong enough; beef-tea made stronger taxes impaired digestions severely, as beef-tea is generally given in a considerable quantity. If, however, the same strength is required with the least possible amount of bulk, beef extract is very stimulating. In cases of extreme internal irritation, such as a bad attack of typhoid fever, all food given is peptonised.

To Peptonise Beef-Tea.—Take half a pint of hot beef-tea and half a pint cold. Mix them; add 30 grains of zymine and 20 grains of bi-carbonate of soda; put a lid on the jar and cover it well over besides, and stand it in a warm place (temp. 120° Fahrenheit) for three hours. Then boil the beef-tea quickly.

Beef Extract.—Scrape 1 lb. of beef finely and put it in a covered jar with 1 tablespoonful of water and a pinch of salt. Put on the lid and stand the jar in a saucepan of boiling water, and let the water boil round it for five hours. A very small quantity must be given at a time or the stomach will be irritated.

Raw Meat Sandwiches sound rather uninviting, but are in reality most easy to take, and are very useful in cases of weakness. Cut thin pieces of bread about one inch square, and in the middle of one put a tiny piece of scraped meat. Put on the other piece of bread and flatten it with a knife, closing the sides completely.

Reviving Extract was given in the hospitals during the influenza epidemic. Take equal quantities of beef, mutton and veal, and put them in a jar with a very little water, and let them cook in the same way as the beef extract. The flavour of this extract is very good.

Under no circumstances should the meat for beef-tea or any broth or extract be put through the mincing machine. Time may be saved but material is wasted, as much of the juice runs away whilst the meat is minced.

Mutton or Veal Broth makes a change from beef-tea. The juice of these meats is not so rich as that of beef, and so the deficiency is supplied by the addition of barley or rice. Take 1 lb. of scrag of mutton and cut away the fat. Cut the meat into very small pieces and put them into a jar with 1 pint of water and a little salt. Put 2 tablespoonfuls of barley in a little saucepan with cold water, and when it comes to the boil pour off the water. This is *blanching* the barley, and must always be done in case nausea be caused. Put the barley into the jar with the mutton and cook for three hours very gently—in the same way as beef-tea. Pour off against the lid into a basin, and stand the latter in cold water to cool the fat which rises to the top. As soon as it is cool, remove all fat and reheat the broth. Sprinkle a little finely-chopped and blanched parsley on the top. Veal broth is made in the same way, substituting fillet or breast of veal for mutton.

Chicken Broth.—Break up the carcase of a chicken from which the breast and legs have been removed, and put it in a stewpan with a blade of mace, a bay-leaf, 1½ pints of water, half a teaspoonful of salt and six white peppercorns. Simmer very gently for three hours and pour off against the lid. If liked, the broth can be slightly thickened with 1 ounce of crushed tapioca.

A great point is gained when milk can be taken. It is the most valuable food we possess, as it contains everything that is necessary for the growth and repair of the body. Next to milk come eggs. If eggs can be taken, the chicken broth just mentioned can be made into a most nourishing and delicious soup as follows:—

Crême de Tapioca.—Put on 1½ pints of chicken broth to boil, and, when boiling, sprinkle in 1 ounce of crushed tapioca. Stir until the tapioca is clear. Beat up the yolks of two eggs in a basin and pour the hot broth on, whisking all the while. Return to the saucepan and stir carefully until the eggs thicken in the soup, but on no account let it boil. Add 1 gill of cream, season with pepper and salt, and serve. Cream is the lightest and most delicate fat we possess, and can often be taken without causing sickness, when any other fat, such as cod liver oil, would disagree. Milk can be enriched by adding a little very finely-chopped suet (about 1 ounce to a pint of milk) and letting it cook very gently for three hours in a jar in the oven. This is very useful for chest and lung complaints. All milk used in the sickroom should be first boiled. Fifteen grains of bi-carbonate of soda to a quart of milk will prevent it turning sour.

Drinks for the sick are very simple, and there is not much variety amongst them. They should never be allowed to stand long in the sick-room, or they become impregnated with the germs of disease. They should be brought into the room fresh and in small quantities and kept covered.

Milk and Soda Water is an excellent drink. The soda counteracts acidity, that is to say, it prevents milk from turning sour in the stomach. In cases of diphtheria, the white of an egg beaten up and mixed with soda water is a very useful drink. White of egg is nourishing, as it contains albumen, which helps to build up the nerves.

Lemonade should be very carefully made. The lemons should be very thinly pared, using only the yellow part of the skin—the zest, as it is called—but none of the white, as it is bitter. The juice should be carefully strained to prevent pips from falling in. Allow one small lemon to half a pint of boiling water. Effervescing lemonade can be made by adding half a small teaspoonful of carbonate of soda to a glass of still lemonade and drinking it effervescing.

Barley Water is nourishing. It can be made either as a decoction or an infusion. The barley should always be blanched. Allow 1 ounce of barley to half a pint of water; if wanted weak, pour boiling water on to the barley and allow it to stand until cold. To make a decoction, take the same proportions of barley and water and simmer gently for two hours. Lemon rind or cinnamon may be used for flavouring.

Rice Water.—1 ounce of rice, quarter of an inch of cinnamon, 1 pint of cold water. Wash the rice well in cold water, drain away the water and put the rice into a small saucepan with 1 pint of fresh cold water and cinnamon; let it simmer one hour. Strain and sweeten. This is for diarrhœa and must be taken cold.

White Wine Whey is often given to produce perspiration. Add two wineglassfuls of sherry to half a pint of boiling milk, and strain this through a fine sieve. Sweeten to taste.

One of the worst deprivations when one is ill—especially to a woman—is the loss of the daily cup of tea. It is the greatest boon if this need not be given up. Tea should never be given after it has stood more than three minutes, or the tannin will be extracted and the nerves may be affected.

Milk Tea is a refreshing drink. It is made by substituting boiling milk for boiling water. The pleasant flavour of the tea is retained without the harmful alkaloid, which is not melted in milk.

Our old friend *Toast and Water* must not be forgotten when talking of sick-room drinks. This is best made by burning a piece of bread, or at all events toasting it black, and then pouring cold water on it and letting it stand. The burnt bread acts as a filter, and the drink itself makes an internal disinfectant.

Care should be taken about the source of the ice used in the sick-room. Get it from a good fishmonger who would be unlikely to keep an inferior article. Much of the ice sold is very dangerous, being very impure and impregnated with disease germs.

In another number we will discuss cookery for convalescents.

FLORENCE SOPHIE DAVSON.

(To be continued.)

more so in contrast with the rough, hard-featured or unhealthy-looking girls and women around her. People said there was something of a gipsy ancestry to be traced in Mara Hamilton's strange deep eyes, eyes clear as lakes at times, reflecting back the tranquil heavens, and at others, stormy and grey like a turbulent sea, or flashing with a wild scorn and anger, from which those who had provoked it shrank back astonished and abashed. Her soft dark hair waved away from her temples and was knotted up with a careless grace under the rough man's cap she wore, and the scarlet handkerchief, which did duty for a collar above her coarse working dress, gave just the touch of colour needed to the clear pallor of a complexion which had still the freshness of youth about it.

Yet handsome as she undeniably was, there was not a man, woman or child in the great factory who ever dared to ask a favour of, still less to take a liberty with, Mara, while to her companion anyone in trouble was sure to turn with an unerring instinct of confidence in her sympathy which they could not have perhaps explained, but which was always justified. Despite her hard life, Elizabeth Elstrey had that rare gift, "a heart at leisure from itself," ready to heed and help wherever she could; but the younger woman was too full of her own bitter wrongs to have thoughts to spare for the injuries of her neighbours. In the whole wide universe, it seemed to her, there had never been such a woe and sorrow as hers.

They were a curious pair of friends. As a matter of fact they had worked together in the same room for years and had had but little in common. But when the crushing calamity came which wrecked Mara's young life, then Elizabeth had stepped quietly forward, and, all unasked, had taken up the position of a watchful protector, which by tacit consent she had held ever since.

After all, the story, alas, was commonplace enough, although to the chief actors it was nothing short of desperate tragedy. Mara had been married at seventeen to a prosperous young workman in a much better position of life, and just three or four years her senior. On him she had poured out all the passionate, undisciplined wealth of an affection which had never before found object or outlet, and which now ran like the tide of some fiercely-flowing stream. Dennis Hamilton, on his side, had drifted into matrimony, against the advice of all his friends, because he was indolent and easy-going, and unable to withstand the stronger nature which had taken captive for a time his wayward fancy. Although he was fond of her in a way, her eager exacting love made demands upon him to which he could not respond. Then, too, used as he was to the decorous conventionalities and comforts of a respectable middle-class home, her thriftless, improvident ways were a continual eyesore to him. He grew more and more idle and indifferent as the days went on. They drifted into poverty, and there were bitter quarrels and recriminations scarcely to be bridged over by Mara's outbursts of childish remorse.

The faults were not all on one side, but the man was young and selfish. He had no patience or compassion for the girl-wife whom he had married in such reckless haste. He grew almost at times to dislike the beautiful, vivid face, so different from the quiet, uncomplaining women at home, who had all unconsciously helped to foster that element of self-seeking which more than anything else will mar the peace of married life. Things did not stand still, but went rapidly from bad to worse, until there came a day, about a twelvemonth after their marriage, when matters reached a crisis. There had been an unusually angry scene of mutual rebellion and wrath. Bitter words were spoken, and finally Dennis Hamilton had flung out of the house, declaring that he would never come back again. So far he had kept his word, though more than four weary years had elapsed. Mara, frightened at last out of all her imaginary troubles by those ill-boding words, had run out after him through the narrow street, amid the scoffs and jeers of the neighbours, to whom the quarrels of the young pair had become a source of indifferent amusement. She had overtaken him, indeed, but a black, bitter mood was on him. He had shaken her off with a curse, and bade her never darken his life again, for he hated her.

Never had he looked or spoken like this. The girl's clinging arms dropped to her side, and the heart within her turned to stone. She crept back to the empty, untidy little house, and, flinging herself face downward on the bed, refused to be comforted. It was then that Elizabeth had come to the rescue. She had always loved the handsome, wilful girl, and her heart had often bled for the havoc that she was making of her life. She was a frequent visitor, and coming just now up the narrow entry, she followed Mara into the deserted home, and never left her again.

The excitement, the wild, hasty race through the streets, and the overpowering shock, had done their work on the girl's then enfeebled frame. Ere another night had passed, a little child, worse than fatherless, was wailing in Elizabeth's unaccustomed arms; and the young mother, hardly more than a child herself, turned her face to the wall, and longed for death which would not come to her.

Nearly five years ago! and since that day Dennis Hamilton had never crossed the threshold of his home. Elizabeth had sent far and wide for him on that dreadful night when Mara's life had hung in the balance; but he could not be found. At his own home a grey-haired mother and a sister watched and waited, and grew sick with hope deferred; but he did not return there. He had gone from them like a stone flung into the water, leaving no trace behind, and it was weeks later that a short, curt letter with a foreign postmark brought the news that he had enlisted on that miserable morning, flinging his responsibilities to the winds, and had gone with his regiment to India, never, so he said, to set foot in the old country again, where life had become unendurable.

He had turned his back in his headstrong selfishness upon his duty; but he did not realise, for many a long day, what that hour of madness and cowardice had done. How a woman, well in years, had suddenly grown old, and a dull gloom had settled down on the silent little house where she sat knitting with trembling fingers and praying for him; nor how the girl who had loved him with such undeserved affection, wounded, and suffering the last extremity of shame and loneliness, grew as the days went by to hate him with a deep, feverish hatred which seemed to scorch up all the springs of love within her. She had been young even for her age, but she rose up from her sick-bed a woman—strong, reckless, yet well able to take care of herself, and with a strange hardening of her beauty, which held people aloof even when they most longed to pity and help.

Only one thing seemed worth living for in the overthrow of her world. To Elizabeth she clung with the same tenacious love which she had hitherto lavished upon her careless young husband. So it had come to pass that, as her friend had no close ties to claim her, the two had kept house together ever since, and together had tended the frail baby life which had met with such a sorry welcome. Whether Mara really cared for her child, Elizabeth oftened wondered. She nursed and watched it, indeed, but in the same dull, mechanical way in which she fulfilled her duties at the factory, to which, as soon as she was strong enough, she returned. But she never kissed and played with it, or murmured over it the fond, foolish nonsense natural to happier mothers. At times, indeed, when the solemn, unconscious gaze of the blue eyes was fixed upon her, bringing back too clear a memory of its father's face, she would turn from it with almost a feeling of repulsion. Had it lived, it would doubtless at last have won upon her; but it was weakly and ailing from the first. There came a chilly autumn morning when it was a year old, when the young mother, who had been watching it all the weary night, rose and laid the shadowy, waxen, motionless form in its tiny bed, and, resting her aching forehead on Elizabeth's broad shoulder, said with a strange sigh, almost of triumph—

"Now it will never suffer anything any more!"

(*To be continued.*)

INVALID COOKERY.

PART II.

IT is during convalescence that the chief difficulties about food arise. During the worst part of the illness so little variety is allowed, broth and toast follows broth and toast; but when once the order for nourishing food has been given, it behoves the one in charge to put on her considering cap and devise many dainty dishes. The preparation of light and easily-digested food for the sick is a most important matter, and she who can do this successfully is helping the doctor better than she could do in any other way. All the food must be well served; no stained tray-cloth or soiled table-napkin must disgust the eye, for the convalescent notices these things keenly. The weakened digestion needs tempting, and if the food looks uninviting, appetite goes.

Food should be as much of a surprise as possible. Never inquire, "Do you think you could fancy so and so to-day?" You will have the trouble for nothing, as you will most certainly be told "No." Ask the doctor first what would be suitable, and then prepare it and present it at the proper time, as if it were to be taken as a matter of course. It probably will be.

With regard to different methods of cooking, roasting and frying render food richer and more difficult of digestion than stewing and boiling. The worst of boiling is, that so

much of the nourishment goes out into the water in which it is cooked. Stewing makes food very tender, and all the nourishment is either in the meat or in the gravy. Mutton is more easily digested than beef, and is not so rich. Poultry is more digestible than meat, and fish than poultry. Game is digestible if fresh; high it will prove dangerous. Only white fish should be given to an invalid, as all the oil they contain is in the liver, and is removed when the latter is taken away, whereas oily fish, such as salmon and herring, have oil all over their bodies, which makes them richer and more difficult to digest. Whiting, sole, lemon sole, fresh haddock, plaice, and cod can all be given to an invalid. Whiting is just as nourishing and digestible as sole, though not so nice. All sauces should be simply made, but thoroughly cooked, as, if the flour with which they are thickened is not well boiled, the starch grains in the flour do not burst, and so double work is thrown on the digestive organs. The latter have not only to assimilate the contents of the starch grains, but have first of all to break open the grains themselves, a process which should occur during cooking. The same remark applies also to the making of a cup of arrowroot. Who does not know the horrible rough taste of a cup of uncooked arrowroot? It should be made thus:—

Put a breakfast cupful of milk to boil. Mix two teaspoonfuls of arrowroot very smoothly in a basin with a little cold water; stir it into the milk when boiling. When it thickens it is ready. It may be sweetened with a little sugar.

A word about starchy foods, such as rice, cornflour, arrowroot, maizena and others. The function of starch in the human body is to give heat and to make fat. It does not form blood, muscle, and bone; therefore it will be seen that taken by themselves starchy foods are not nourishing, as they are too often supposed to be. In conjunction with other foods which *do* go to make blood, muscle, and bone, such as eggs and milk, they are very useful, but not by themselves. "I shall feed her up," a lady said recently to a doctor when the latter had recommended a generous diet for a convalescent. "I shall give her some of the purest arrowroot which friends send us from Bermuda. What better could she have?" No better *arrowroot* certainly, but better *food*. Arrowroot made with milk is nourishing; rice boiled in milk or served with milk is so also; if eggs can be added, so much the better. Unfortunately they make many people bilious.

Jellies are another of the things about which many fallacies prevail. In most cases they are simply a starvation diet, consisting, as they usually do, of gelatine, lemon juice, sugar, and a little wine to flavour. Strengthening jellies, such as those made almost entirely with port wine or beef-tea, are useful for the stimulant they contain; but except in the case of egg or milk jellies they are not nourishing foods. They do excellently to stop a gap, to fill up in a long list of small meals such as has often to be given during convalescence, as well as during the illness itself; but they must not be relied on for nourishment.

Oysters are very digestible if taken raw or very gently cooked. Care must be taken not to cook them too long, or they get leathery. American blue points may often be had at 8d. a dozen, and for cooking purposes are just as good as natives.

For *Stewed Oysters*, take the liquor from 1 dozen oysters and scald it. Melt ½ ounce of butter in a small saucepan, and stir in ½ ounce of fine flour with a wooden spoon. Add the liquor from the oysters to this by degrees, taking care to keep it smooth, and stir it over the fire until it boils. Add two tablespoonfuls of cream and two of milk, and the oysters, pepper and salt, and let the oysters just heat through, but on no account allow them to boil.

The following recipes, if carefully followed, will all be found easy of digestion and very nice:—

Fillets of Chicken.—Cut fillets from the breast of a chicken, having first removed the skin. Lay them on a buttered baking-tin and sprinkle slightly with pepper and salt and a few drops of lemon juice. The last is to whiten it. Cover with buttered paper and cook in a moderate oven for fifteen minutes. Serve quickly on a hot plate. Mix the liquor in the tin with one tablespoonful of cream and pour it round. Fish can be skinned and cooked in the same way. Chicken cooked thus is very nice cold, as the flavour is so well kept in.

Chicken Creams.—Take a ¼ pound of white meat, either veal, rabbit or chicken. Scrape it and then pound it, mix with half a gill of smooth and well-made white sauce, add pepper and salt and the yolk of one egg. Put the mixture in a well-buttered mould, smooth on the top with a knife dipped in warm water, and steam gently until just set. If no steamer is at hand, put them on a fold of paper in a stewpan, and allow the water to come half up the mould. It must not do more than simmer or it will curdle.

Boiled Rabbit is light and digestible. See that it is cooked gently and is nice and tender, and serve with very thin rolls of fried bacon, The remains may be used as follows:—

Rabbit Rissoles.—Take half a gill of thick white sauce and mix it with 2 ounces of finely-minced cooked rabbit and ½ ounce of minced cooked ham, pepper and salt. Spread on a plate to get cold. Divide the mixture in equal quantities and roll into round shapes, egg and crumb, and fry a golden brown. Drain well on soft paper before serving.

Stewed Pigeon.—Cut the pigeon into four pieces, and brown them in a frying-pan; stew very gently in a little good stock or beef tea. Thicken the stock with a little brown thickening, first removing the pieces of pigeon. A mushroom stewed with the pigeon greatly improves the flavour; but care should be taken about giving this, as mushrooms often disagree with delicate digestions.

Pillau of Fowl, made rather more simply than usual, is a light and tempting dish. Take care that the portion given to the invalid contains no almonds and raisins. The pleasant flavour which they impart to the fowl and rice while cooking will do no harm, but they would be indigestible if eaten. The following method is excellent:—Put the fowl, trussed for boiling, into some stock and half cook. Stone 3 ounces of raisins, blanch 2 ounces of almonds, and peel two onions and cut them into rings. Very gently fry the onions in 1½ ounces of butter, taking care they do not burn. Wash and dry 1 pound of rice and put it in the saucepan with the almonds and raisins, onions, and 1 inch of cinnamon. Make a well in the middle and put in the fowl. Cover with stock and stew slowly until the rice and chicken are cooked and the rice has absorbed all the stock. Place the chicken on a hot dish with the rice round. The portion given to the invalid should consist of nothing but fowl and rice.

Fish Mould.—Remove the skin and bones from a medium-sized fresh haddock, and rub the flesh through a sieve. Make enough panada to equal two-thirds of the fish when it is rubbed through. The panada is made as follows: Put on half a pint of water to boil with 1 ounce of butter and a pinch of ground mace. When it boils, stir in by degrees ¼ pound of bread crumbs, and stir and cook over the fire until the sides of the saucepan are left clean. Pound the panada and the fish together and add two yolks of eggs and pepper and salt. Steam carefully in a small buttered mould until firm—about half an hour. Turn out and serve with any nice sauce. This can be made with any other white fish.

Fillets aux Œufs.—Take a fillet from a medium-sized sole or plaice and cut it in half lengthways. Melt ½ ounce of butter in a saucepan and stir in an egg well beaten, one teaspoonful of chopped parsley, pepper, and salt. Cook this over the fire until lightly set, and then spread on half the fillet and fold the other half over. Lay on a buttered tin, and put a piece of buttered paper over and bake in a moderate oven ten minutes. This will be just enough for one person. It is better always to take a fillet from a fairly big fish than to serve a whole very small sole or plaice, as the latter are all skin and bone and are most unsatisfactory.

Arrowroot Soufflé.—Half a pint of milk, one dessertspoonful of arrowroot, 1 ounce of butter, 1 ounce of castor sugar, one egg, flavouring (lemon rind, bayleaf, or vanilla). Put the milk on to boil with the lemon rind or bayleaf and the sugar and butter. Mix the arrowroot smoothly with a little cold milk and when the milk in the saucepan boils, stir it quickly in. Cook over the fire three or four minutes, stirring all the time. Remove the bayleaf or lemon rind. If vanilla is preferred it should be added now, otherwise the flavour will go off while the milk is boiling. Let the arrowroot cool a little, and then stir in the eggs well beaten. Beat the whites very stiffly and stir them lightly in. Pour all into a buttered pie-dish and bake in a moderate oven twenty minutes. It should be a pale golden brown and well risen. This *soufflé* may also be steamed in a mould.

Dutch Pudding.—Three eggs, half a pint of milk, 2 ounces of butter, 2 ounces of ground rice, 1½ ounces of white sugar, vanilla to flavour. Put the rice into a saucepan with the milk, mixed very smoothly, stir until it boils; then add the butter, and simmer until the mixture is thick, stirring often. Let it cool a little, and then flavour well with vanilla and add the yolks of the eggs and the sugar. Stir in lastly the white of one egg well beaten. Line the sides of a dish with pastry, ornament the edges, put in the rice mixture, and bake about half an hour. The pastry is not intended to be eaten, but to absorb any moisture during cooking. Beat the whites of two eggs stiffly with a little sugar, and pile on the top when baked. Decorate the top with a few crystallised cherries, and bake till set.

Amber Mould.—Three-quarters of a gill of water, ¼ ounce of gelatine, 2 ounces of lump sugar, rind and juice of one lemon, two eggs. Rub the sugar on the lemons, and squeeze the juice over. Melt the gelatine in the water, and pour it on the lemon and sugar. Add the yolks of the eggs well beaten, and stir over a very gentle fire until it thickens. Lastly, stir in the whites beaten very stiffly; pour into a wet mould and turn out when cold.

Lemon Custard.—Pare the rind of two good-sized lemons very thin. Pour one pint of boiling water over, cover with a plate, and let it stand all night. In the morning take away the rind and add the juice of two lemons to the water in which it has been steeped. Mix 1 ounce of arrowroot smoothly with a little water, and add it to the lemon water and ½ pound of lump sugar. Stir over the fire until it thickens and the arrowroot is cooked, and then add two eggs well beaten. Pour it into a jug and stand it in a saucepan of boiling water over the fire, and stir until the eggs thicken, taking care not to let it curdle.

FLORENCE SOPHIE DAVSON.

(To be continued.)