

LADY COOKS AND THEIR TRAINING.



Read in *Silas Marner* that when Dr. Blick of Flitton congratulated clever Miss Priscilla Lammeter on her last batch of pork pies, she replied, "I'll answer for it, the next shall be as good. My pork pies don't turn out well by chance." Miss Priscilla's neighbours, the Miss Gunns, looked down on her because she said "mate" for meat, and called a horse an "oss," whereas (in the pride of their superior gentility) they called it an "orse" even in domestic privacy. From all of which one gathers that the good Priscilla's knowledge was more practical than theoretical. It is most likely that she was able to cook before she had learnt to read, and would have felt the utmost contempt for anyone unskilled in domestic matters. Such an institution as a school of cookery was undreamt of in her time, and the idea would have been scouted by all good housewives eighty years ago. Girls should learn at home, they would have said. We live in very different days.

In England or Scotland the intending cookery student may well be puzzled by the number of schools amongst which she must make a choice. In England there are cookery schools licensed by the Education Department to grant diplomas in nearly all the large towns.

Such diplomas qualify the holder to teach on the London and other Board schools. I cannot undertake to guide in a choice of cookery schools; the circumstances of the student and the use to which she hopes to put her knowledge must help her to decide.

If she wishes to take up high-class cookery as a profession, she will not do better than go to the National School of Cookery in Buckingham Palace Road, London. After taking a diploma for plain and household cookery, which must in all cases be done first, she can, if she chooses, take one for high-class cookery. At this school the dishes to be sold are displayed each day in a room just off the entrance; the public are able to buy them for cost price; there is a ready sale, especially for high-class dishes, and so there is, of course, any amount of practice in that department.

In some of the smaller schools the training in high-class cookery is often a difficulty; not being over-supplied with funds, they are forced to depend on private orders for the sale of food, and orders are precarious. The situation of the school building again is not always so favourable as Buckingham Palace Road, which is in the centre of a fashionable neighbourhood, and likely customers are continually passing. Still, in spite of difficulties, students in high-class cookery are conscientiously taught the dishes, but naturally they cannot make them so often nor in such quantities as at the Buckingham Palace Road School. It is easier to make arrangements for the disposal of plain and what is called "household" cookery to some school or institution near at hand, so there is always plenty of practice in that department. Should work in elementary schools be the ultimate object, the North Midland School at Leicester, or the National Society's School at Lambeth, would answer the purpose admirably, as in both these schools special attention is paid to teaching classes of children.

In all cookery schools licensed to grant diplomas, more is required of the student than the cooking alone. Even before a diploma in plain cookery is gained, she has to pass written examinations in the theory and chemistry of food, and at some schools an examina-

tion in housekeeping (including the due management of a small income), and to show a certain amount of knowledge of physiology and hygiene. She has also to give demonstrations in public on cookery, and to satisfy the examiners as to her capacity not only as a cook, but as a teacher; any strong defects of manner or speech would disqualify. An absence of nervousness is a great blessing to any woman who thinks of taking up the work of a cookery teacher; the strain of talking and cooking at the same time is no light one until the worker becomes accustomed by much practice. On the whole it is best for those to take up this profession who are in the habit of cooking at home; yet I have known women of over thirty who never cooked a thing in their lives until they began training make excellent cooks and teachers. For one reason they brought mature intelligence to bear upon the subject, and for the other they had nothing to unlearn; no habit, for instance, of kneading the bread-dough until it was so tough that it could not be made to rise with any amount of persuasion, or of pounding the pastry with the rolling-pin until it became like leather. But it is certainly an advantage to have a certain amount of familiarity with the subject before beginning work at a cookery school, and the preliminary nervousness which is so often the cause of dishes turning out failures is foregone; also the fatigue which is so overpowering at first to those unaccustomed to the work is felt the less.

The fees at the various cookery schools vary from ten pounds to twenty pounds for the tuition necessary to obtain a plain class or household cookery diploma. This does not in any case include board; in some cases arrangements are made for the boarding of students, as at the Edinburgh Cookery School and at the one in Buckingham Palace Road, London; but of course this is charged extra. Fees for boarding come to about twenty-five or thirty shillings a week. Also several books are necessary for the curriculum; these include such works as the *Chemistry of Cookery, Food*, by Professor Church, *The Chemistry of Common Life*, by Johnson and Church, a test-book of physiology, one on hygiene, and so on. For the benefit of those who may be thinking of taking a diploma in cookery at any of the English and Scotch schools in the British Isles I will describe shortly the work at two well-known schools.

It takes at least six months in any good school of cookery before the student can gain a diploma in plain and household cookery. In most schools it takes nine months. The full training, including a high class diploma and the necessary examination in theoretical subjects, will take a year at least. The hours at the National School of Cookery in Buckingham Palace Road are from ten to one o'clock in the morning, and from two to three, sometimes two to four, in the afternoon.

The student has, when she first comes into the school, to undergo a week's tuition in scullery work. She then passes into the Artisan Kitchen, which is under the charge of one of the staff teachers. She works under the immediate supervision of a student who has entered four weeks earlier than herself, the staff teacher being always at hand to correct any mistakes. After the first month she will herself teach any new-comer for a fortnight, then she practises herself again, and so on. She also learns to demonstrate to adults on "artisan" dishes. The class of cookery taught in this kitchen is very plain; it includes stock-making and vegetable soups, the primary rules of cookery, viz.,

roasting, boiling, steaming, frying, grilling, and broiling; simple puddings and cakes, the cooking of vegetables. At the end of fourteen weeks comes a practical examination on certain dishes selected from the list of those taught during the period of instruction in the Artisan Kitchen.

Then the student passes for two months into the Plain Class Kitchen. Here the dishes taught are slightly more advanced than those shown in the Artisan Kitchen. The method of teaching is the same, that is to say, a staff teacher is present to give general supervision and the immediate teaching is done by students who are a few weeks ahead of those they are teaching. No demonstration is done in the Plain Class Kitchen. At the end of a month the student undergoes another practical examination. Then she passes to the High Class Cookery Kitchen, and here goes through a course, alternately learning and teaching new students, of very elaborate cookery; clear soup, bisques, purées, entrées, creams, soufflés, ices, sauces of every description. The work in this kitchen is continually supervised by a well-known chef, Mr. Hermann Senn. Whilst here the student learns to give demonstrations in high-class cookery; these lectures by the students are open to the public at the fee of eightpence. Ladies and cooks avail themselves largely of these opportunities.

After seven weeks in this department there is an examination in high-class cookery. Then after spending another seven weeks here, three months are devoted to learning to conduct children's classes. During the last term also there are several examinations to be gone through, on chemistry, on the theory of education, a theoretical examination on high-class cookery, on the chemistry of food, and so on. Amongst other examinations the student is required to cook a dinner of seven courses in four hours—from nine in the morning until one o'clock.

The fee for the full course at Buckingham Palace Road is thirty pounds, to be paid in three instalments; fourteen pounds the first week, ten pounds the seventeenth week, and six pounds the twenty-seventh week. Special lectures are given in the school two or three times a week to prepare the students for the various theoretical examinations.

At the North Midland School of Cookery at Leicester very special attention is paid to the training and teaching in artisan cookery suitable for the working classes. The student undergoes a few days' practice in scullery work, and then begins to practise plain cookery in the school under one of the assistant teachers; the head-mistress is always present to correct any errors. Each day a big dinner is cooked for a large boys' school near at hand. At one o'clock a large covered basket is wheeled into the school, and the hot dishes are packed quickly in and sent off. In the afternoon from two o'clock to half-past four, more cooking, or perhaps preparation for the next day. After school-hours the pupil has plenty of work to do at home. It may be that she has a long paper on house-keeping to write, or a specimen demonstration to prepare. These test-papers are continued during the whole of the training, and are of the greatest use to the student. She is at liberty to make use of any books she can procure to help her to answer the questions given.

After she has been in the school some little while she will begin to give her three demonstrations to certain ladies on the committee of the cookery school; the marks allotted for each of these go to make up the sum required for her diploma. For this ordeal she is

allowed to choose her own dishes. As the day approaches on which she is to give her first demonstration, how carefully the student prepares her lecture! Text-books are searched through and through for "something to say." When the time arrives she carefully collects all ingredients and utensils necessary and awaits her auditor in the little room set apart for the purpose. She has a nice little lecture all pat to deliver. Alas! when she rises in her place and looks down at the callous-looking spectators, it is too probable that all her ideas will vanish. The sound of her own voice as it comes back to her ears in terrified accents alarms and disconcerts her. Happy is she who has the technical part of her work so at her fingers' ends that the task is carried through without a failure, and the recipe correctly given. No one need be discouraged if the first effort is not altogether a success, for some of the best lecturers are often very nervous at first. It is to the credit of the students that as a rule they prefer to run the gauntlet before a lady whom they know to be expert at cooking and a good housekeeper than to be judged by one whose too great leniency is the result of lack of knowledge. Before she sits for her written examinations, which comprise papers on the theory of food and housekeeping and on the various branches of cookery, excellent test examinations are held. She has also the opportunity of listening to many demonstrations by the advanced students on certain dishes which she may not have had the opportunity of practising in the school herself. The head-mistress closely watches the progress of the pupils in the kitchen, and the marks for cookery that are adjudged on the diploma are set down by

degrees during the training. These marks are not adjudged every day, but the knowledge that they may be set down at any time keeps the pupils up to the mark and prevents carelessness.

After the student has been in the school for about six months she will be allowed to sit for her papers on the theory of food, and physiology, on artisan cookery and on plain and household cookery. If she succeeds in obtaining a diploma for plain and high-class cookery, she can, if she wishes, train for a diploma in high-class cookery. This will necessitate another three months' training.

Happy is the student who has work awaiting her as soon as she has taken her diploma. Work may be found under the School Board at from thirty pounds to seventy or eighty pounds a year, to teach cookery to the children in the schools, and there is similar work to be had in the Church schools.

Some find it remunerative to get up ladies' cookery classes; but this entails a great deal of trouble, as it is so difficult to get a class together, and unless the circumstances are peculiarly fortunate there are the expenses of hiring a suitable room or hall, gas, advertising, and so on. Children's classes are certainly monotonous, and the work is not very well paid, but it is regular and the hours are limited, whereas experience soon teaches to what indefinite lengths a ladies' practice class may drag out.

The County Councils both in London and the provinces have been providing teachers to lecture on cooking to the poor for some years past, at very good fees varying from 10s. 6d. and a guinea a lesson, and this has opened a large field of labour to teachers. This work

is very interesting, but it often entails travelling long distances to get to the room in which the class is held.

In many instances teachers have found it to their advantage to take a situation as matron or assistant in some institution.

Many ex-students get up a good connection and go out to cook for dinner or luncheon parties. The fee charged is usually a guinea. Others give private lessons at ladies' houses at fees varying from 5s. 6d. to half a guinea, according to the length of time and the quality of cooking required. The post of "lady cook" in a private family is a product of later years. I have known cases in which, owing to the skill and tact of the cook, complete success resulted. In other cases there has been disastrous failure. To anyone thinking of undertaking this post I would give this warning. Do not take the situation unless the other servants are also ladies; do not insist on having your meals with the family, but keep to your own department.

Any lady engaging a cook and housemaid should be able to give them a sitting-room to themselves. If these rules are always adhered to, the experiment would succeed more often than it does at present.

A very excellent plan has been adopted of late years at certain hospitals, of having a qualified lady cook to superintend the other cooks in their preparation of the patients' food. She prepares and directs the work, and the others work as kitchen-maids under her. Certain public schools, such as the City of London School, Tiffin's Foundation at Kingston-on-Thames and others, have lately added cookery to the list of subjects taught.

F. S. D.

CHARACTERISTIC CHURCH TOWERS OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

PART VII. WORCESTERSHIRE.

THE church architecture of Worcestershire is so similar to that of Gloucestershire that the observations which we have made upon the latter county may be taken in describing the former. Just as Gloucester Cathedral is the representative of the one county, so is the tower of Worcester Cathedral the finest example of the latter. We have in these papers refrained from giving cathedrals, so that we can only refer to the fact. Worcestershire has a considerable number of fine towers. Perhaps Great Malvern is the most perfect church tower upon a large scale, but the so-called Abbot's Tower at Evesham, formerly the Campanile of the Abbey Church, is a stately and beautiful structure erected by Abbot Litchfield about the year 1513, and is covered

with rich panelling and crowned by a pierced battlement and eight pinnacles. The central tower of Pershore Abbey Church is also a fine example, but the pinnacles are modern. At Little Malvern Priory Church the open battlements and pinnacles have disappeared, and are replaced by a pyramidal roof of tiles. At Great Malvern not only are the parapets pierced, but the pinnacles also, and the whole structure is covered with panelling. The church is, however, a very rich one, the exterior being entirely Perpendicular, but internally the arches of the nave are Norman, of the same heavy and plain character as we see at Gloucester Cathedral, to which this fine church bears much similarity, though it is neither so large nor splendid as the Cathedral; both were, however, formerly abbeys, and were formerly plain Norman buildings, which about Henry VII.'s reign were adorned by sumptuous additions carried out in the latest style of Pointed Gothic. In one respect probably Great Malvern Church has no rival in England, and that

is the beauty and remarkable quantity of ancient stained glass. Every window is filled, and curiously, when the church was for the most part rebuilt, the ancient glass was re-used, so that we find "Perpendicular" windows filled with thirteenth and fourteenth century glass. The church is beautifully situated, surrounded by trees and the villas of a modern fashionable town; singularly, the effect is not incongruous, as the modern houses in Great Malvern are unpretentious stone buildings.

There are a few spires in Worcestershire. A very lofty one is to be noticed at Worcester, but of so poor a design that it has probably been rebuilt. Two examples exist at All Saints' and Saint Laurence, Evesham. They are not very remarkable though the one at All Saints' Church is fairly lofty. The best spire we have seen in the county is at Bromsgrove Parish Church, but as this stands almost upon the borders of Warwickshire, it may almost be regarded as an offshoot from the magnificent spires of that county.

MEDEA.

AIETES was king in Colchis on the Circassian coast, and there in the temple of Ares hung the Golden Fleece guarded by a sleepless dragon, and fondly cherished by the king who had been warned that only so long as it remained in Colchis would he be ruler in the land. Now this is how the Golden Fleece came to the Circassian coast. Athamas ruled over the Minuai in Bœotia, and he had two children, Phrixus and Helle, whom Ino their stepmother hated and wished to destroy.

But a golden ram rescued them from the wrath of Ino and carried them away on its back. Helle, indeed, did not come safe over the seas, but fell off the ram's back and was drowned. And the strait she fell into is to this day called Hellespont, the Sea of Helle. But Phrixus, her brother, the ram bore safely to Colchis, to the land of Aietes. There he was kindly received, and married a daughter of the king. But first, in fulfilment of a vow, he sacrificed the ram to Ares and hung up its

fleece in the temple of the war god and placed his sword above it. Time went by, and Phrixus died and was buried in this foreign land. But his spirit knew no rest, continually haunting the land of his forefathers, and urging the Minuai to build a ship and set out for Colchis and bring back the Golden Fleece, for only then would his soul have peace. But the Minuai were afraid and lacking in boldness; and many years passed before Jason, son of Aeson, a Thessalian who dwelt in