

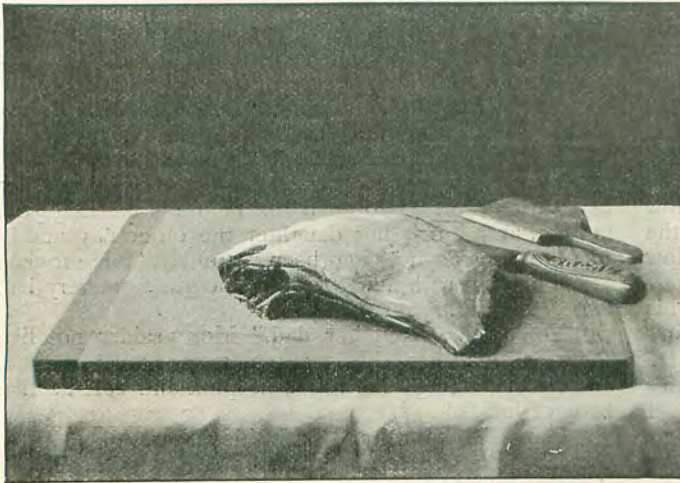
A LESSON IN CUTLETS.

THE suggestion of a dish of cutlets for the family table causes the economical housewife to shrink at the bare idea. When the butcher charges sixpence apiece for them, and

we can do a great deal; its cost at elevenpence per pound will be one shilling and tenpence, and we shall get from it eight cutlets, with a savoury stew into the bargain.

Choose small mutton rather than large, and get as much superfluous fat taken off before it is weighed as you can. The butcher should saw off the chine-bone and chop the breast-bones across; then with a sharp and strong knife the cook can do the rest herself. Usually, in cutting through the piece, we get two cutlets to each bone; but if the meat is very small, we shall only get three with two bones. Cut them right through; then take off most of the flap in a piece, and begin to trim and pare the cutlet proper, so as to bring it to a tapering point, giving it what the French term "a handle." Some people like to have a little fat left on; it is very sweet if not scorched in the cooking, but for an invalid it would perhaps be necessary to sacrifice it all. This need not be wasteful, for all the bits of pure fat will render down and form excellent dripping.

After the trimming process is complete, we shall separate the scraps that have meat and bone in them from those which are pure fat, putting the former aside for our savoury stew. Then each cutlet should be lightly beaten with the cutlet-bat,



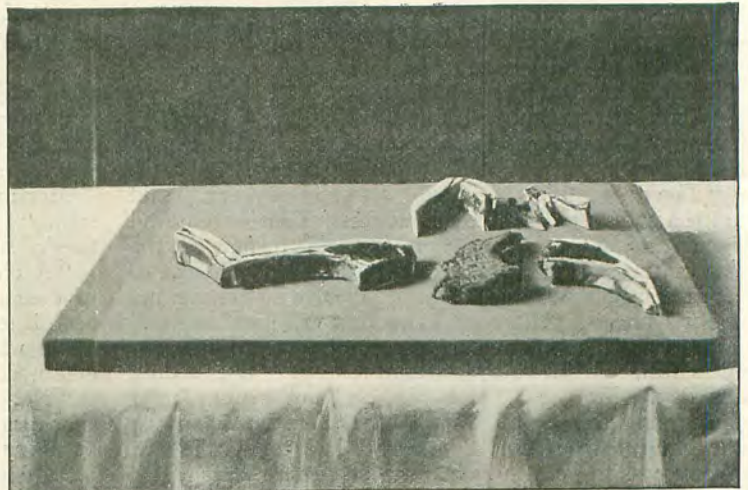
BEST END OF THE NECK.

an ordinary masculine appetite demands not less than two for its contentment, cutlets must perforce degenerate into the more substantial and less costly chop.

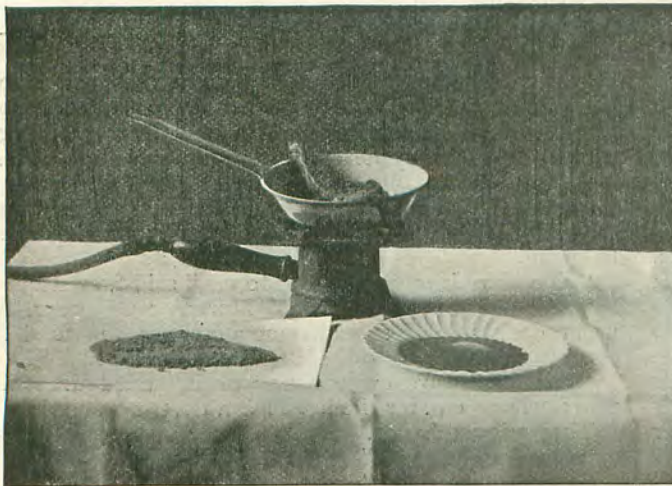
Our object in this lesson, however, is to show that when properly managed a cutlet is by no means uneconomical, and for the small family, especially for that "table set for two," which the newly-married wife sometimes finds it so difficult to cater for, they are pre-eminently valuable, because they give scope for a greater variety than almost anything else that can be mentioned.

The nicest cutlets are those cut from what is technically known as the "best end of the neck," although a piece of loin would do as well, using the under-fillet for a dish by itself. But there is a difference of threepence in the price of the two cuts, and this is worth consideration.

With a piece of about two pounds' weight of best end of the neck of either mutton or lamb,

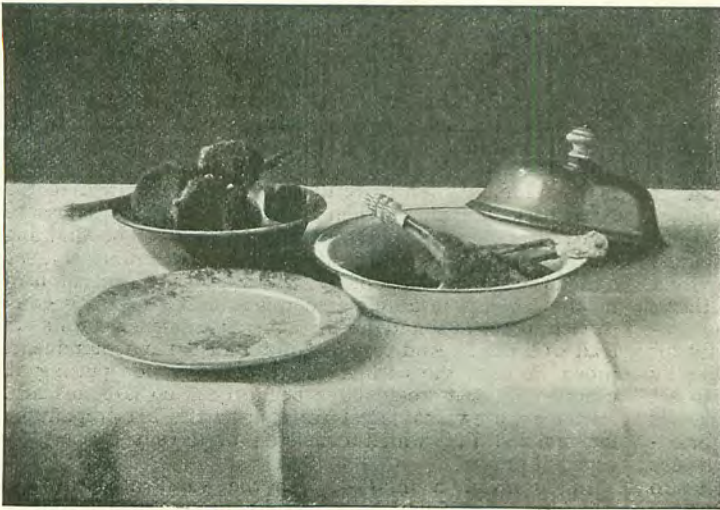


THE TRIMMING.



ON THE STOVE.

coated on both sides with beaten egg, and covered with the finest raspings. These raspings we make by drying all crusts and scraps of bread in a slow oven, then crushing them to powder whilst they are hot, using a rolling-pin if there is no pestle and mortar available. These should be sifted before being put away, and when wanted for use, enough can be poured out on to a piece of paper and mixed with pepper and salt, also a pinch of savoury herbs. The cutlet is now ready for frying, and it is better to do one or two at a time in a small pan rather than to run the risk of burnt fat because the pan was too large. Use the best clarified dripping for frying, and see that it is at the right heat before putting in the cutlet. You will know this by its becoming quite still, when a faint smoke will arise from it. Turn the cutlets over when they have been in the pan about a minute, and do not let them cook more on one side than the other. They will be cooked sufficiently in about six minutes when kept regularly turned. Place on a tin to keep hot whilst the rest are being fried, but do not cover them over, or the crispness will be lost. Such things as gravies,



WITH POTATO RISSOLES.

purées, and centres, should be arranged before the frying begins, so that the cutlets are not spoiled by waiting.

Supposing it is a bachelor dish we are preparing, the cutlets might be served with a rich tomato gravy or sauce—though we will hope not with consequences *à la* Pickwick—and to accompany these a few potato rissoles, which would have been fried first.

For a party of three or four, or more, a nice way of serving is to make a mound of mashed potato in the centre of a dish; browning this slightly, then to arrange the cutlets, each adorned with its little frill, in a circle round this, a thickened gravy round the base. Needless to say that instead of potato we can have a mound of French beans, or kidney ditto, of green peas, spinach, mushrooms, and tomatoes—indeed, anything we fancy that is suitable. But do not forget that a nice gravy is indispensable as well. And a word *en parenthèse* as to this gravy. Supposing you have no stock in hand to use, you can still make a good sauce, providing you have part of a tin of tomatoes or some catsup, and a pot of Liebig's extract of meat. Take a small bit of dripping about the size of a walnut, and chop finely a shallot or two. Frizzle these together; then mix with them a spoonful of flour, two tablespoonfuls of tomato, a teaspoonful of Liebig, some salt and pepper, and a good tumblerful of water. Stir well, and boil these together over the fire. You can, of course, add any other sauce or flavouring you may happen to have, but it will be sufficiently good without it.

Now we come to the preparation of our last dish, which is a *ragoût* made from the scraps and trimmings, a very good dish for the children's table, by the way. The chine-bone that was cut off the joint should be put into this to help to enrich the gravy.

For this *ragoût* we have also to prepare some potatoes by paring and washing them, some

parsnips or turnips also, and several nice white onions. Arrange these in layers, cutting the scraps of meat as even in size as possible, and rolling them in flour. When the stewpan is full, having the potatoes on the top, sprinkle seasoning liberally over all and pour in a teacupful or two of water. Cover closely, and stew gently in the oven for at least two hours. Remove the fat from the gravy if there seems too much, then serve the stew in the same pan in which it was cooked, pinning a clean serviette neatly round it.

L. H. Y.

VARIETIES.

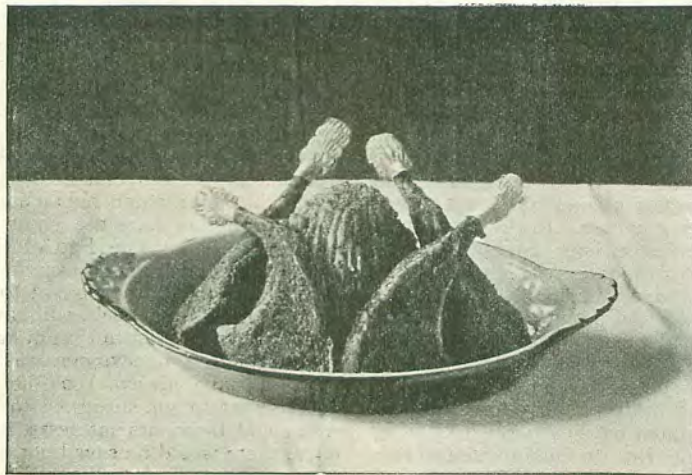
STORMS ARE USEFUL.—Continual sailing on a smooth sea never yet made a skilful mariner; it is a storm that awakens dexterity and power.

MASTERY THROUGH LABOUR.—Nothing that is of real worth can be achieved without courageous working. We owe our growth chiefly to that active striving of the will, that encounter with difficulty, which we call effort; and it is astonishing how often results apparently impracticable are thus made possible.

TAKE CARE WHAT YOU DO.—Day by day every pebble and every little stream is busy carving its history on the earth's surface; so does each word and act of yours inscribe your history in the memory of your fellows.

SMILING WOMAN.—“A woman,” says Sam Slick, “has two smiles that an angel might envy—the smile that accepts the lover afore the words are uttered, and the smile that lights on the first-born baby and assures him of a mother's love.”

A WISE LIFE.—The great guiding landmarks of a wise life are indeed few and simple—to do our duty, to avoid useless sorrow, and to acquiesce patiently in the inevitable.



WITH MOUND OF MASHED POTATOES.



READY FOR THE RAGOÛT.