SOUPS FOR TWO.

Again similar households exist where two ladies, sisters for instance, or two bachelors, join in having a quiet home, in which they continue to live in the same style to which they were accustomed in earlier life, when their father and mother seemed to manage comfortably, and yet so comfortably, that the never-to-be-forgotten old house at home. Changes, however, have come. The inevitable break-up of the old home has taken place, and it will often be found that the inmates, so to speak, in the change of fresh life in couples, and it is curious to note how these couples vary in their mode of living. Some keep up the traditions of the past, some, from want of idleness, and want of energy, seem to sink into a different mode of life altogether. As a rule it will be found that the crucial test-point is the late dinner. This is the distinctive feature of "servants," allow me this word to lapse altogether, or to degenerate into one that is utterly unworthy of the name. The result is, for the household life with its welter and strictly economical comfort is lost sight of. The one domestic, whose weekly labour is hardly equal to that of the one-day's work of an hotel servant, seems to take less and less interest in her duties, and the well-meant kindness of the mistress or master results in her being unable ever again to obtain a situation in a properly ordered gentleman's house.

We will however suppose that in our household of the three late dinner each comes with soup. We will also suppose that all the bones, either cooked or raw, are never thrown away or given to the dog, but are carefully preserved and used in order to avoid the necessity of buying meat specially for the purpose of soup-making. We must also bear in mind that we are adapting ourselves to circumstances. We are making soup in very small quantities, and our soup will have a constant change; but before entering into details of manufacture it may be well to have a few words on the use of soups in general contrived from an English, and we must add the more economical French, point of view. By a vast number of ordinary English housekeepers soup is regarded as essentially a winter dish. How often do we hear the remark, "Oh, it is no use having soup made in summer, it won't keep." Again, we must bear in mind that we cannot afford to have soup every day. Perhaps the chief objection to having soup every day in this country is summer impress, "Oh, but think of the trouble; we cannot afford to waste the material." An Englishman says he cannot afford to have soup every day.

A Frenchman finds by experience that he cannot afford to dine every day without soup.

In our previous article on "Portions" we recommended boiling both a large fowl and a lot of mutton before cooking. We would ask any unprejudiced person to look at the remains on the table after dining out for an ordinary party: Roast loin of mutton, boiled fowls, peas and potatoes. Think of what is left on the plates, and remember that a good cool gallon out of these bones, had they been raw, and the shells of the peas which we presume have been thrown away, have made sufficient green pea-soup for a large party, and yet these same people who throw away the bones and shells would regard green pea-soup as an expensive luxury that they cannot afford.

In hot weather there are few things with which we can commence our dinner more grateful than a ladleful of some nice-flavoured soup, clear and white, such as spring soup, green pea, or leek, or a good vegetable marrow soup, cauliflower soup, etc.; yet many English housekeepers confine their soup to one land only served in winter, generally consisting of a thick gravy often over-flavoured with mushroom ketchup.

We must however commence the practical part of our subject, and that is, how to make a soup in sufficient quantity for two persons each day out of the materials we have in hand, without buying meat specially for the purpose. Our motto is, Little and often. We remember one ladleful of soup is generally considered sufficient for each person on most occasions. We do not want to dine off soup like aldermen at a city dinner, where two or three dishes of clear turtle, and one of thick is considered a fair allowance. We would recommend the following experiment. Take a quart jug and an ordinary silver soup ladle. Fill the jug with the laddle, to the brim. The ladle tikkles it to fill. It is only by some practical test like this that we can grasp the idea, how very small a quantity of soup is absolutely requisite for two persons.

We will divide our soups into three classes—thick, white, and clear; but in each case the bones are the same. We will commence by describing how to make soup in a small quantity.

First we will suppose that we have cut up a good-sized fowl into joints as described in our short time back. The fowl is cut up raw, the carcasse boiled for about an hour, and the meat scraped from the bones, in order to make a dish of chicken. The wings, the two legs, the breast and the merry—thought—have been parboiled in the stock and allowed to get cold in it. The stock is then placed in a stewpan or saucepan with all the bare bones and allowed to boil. To this little stock-pot must be added anything we may have left about the house, bones, trimmings of gravy, etc., etc. We must also add the outside part of a head of celery, a couple of onions, and a slice or two of carrot. We can add a small turnip to this employment. We can add parsley and teaspoon of mixed savoury herbs. We must add plenty of water at starting, so that the bones and vegetables may be covered. The stewpan or stockpan can be simmered occasionally, and care should be taken to remove all scum which rises early, soon after the bones and vegetables are first put in.

The longer these bones, etc., remain boiling the better. If put on the first thing after breakfast, they should be simmered fairly gently the whole day, and should not be strained off till the last thing at night, when the quantity of liquid should have boiled away till rather less than a quart is left. It is best to strain it off when nearly cold, as then the fat and grease likely to come to the surface, when they can be removed in the morning.

This stock, when cold, ought, as a rule, to be clear, not thick, with firm jelly, but fowl-bones differ, and some contain less gelatine and more fat. In this case, it is best to boil it away till it is still further reduced in bulk by a second boiling, when allowed to get cold, it will be found that it throws up a lot more fat that was held in solution, so to speak, in the stock before.

This quart of stock is now the basis of nearly every soup we may want, and we will give a few instances of the way in which it may be used. We must, however, remember that it is not bright.

Gravy Soup.—Take, say, a pint of the stock. Make it hot in a small saucepan, and add two good-sized teaspoonsful of extract of meat, a little salt and white pepper, and sufficient brown flour to make the soup not thick, but to take away its semi-transparent quality the predominate taste of brown flour. A sufficient quantity of flour would be sufficient for the purpose. Of brown and white flour and how to make them, we shall have to speak, but without a supply always on hand, the best cooks are helpless and good thick soup and gravy impossible.

On-Tail Soup (Imitations).—If we wish, under the circumstances, to have real ox-tail soup, we can have half the ox-tail stewed one day, and the remainder left for making soup, in which case, of course, the ox-tail is once again, we can have an excellent imitation by buying a calf's tail. This must be cut up into small pieces, stewed in the stock till tender, and the pieces put by and added to the soup.

The soup itself must be prepared as follows—Take a pint of the stock, and throw in while boiling the thick, as in the case of the bones, add a good teaspoonful of celery, a couple of onions, and a slice or two of carrot. We can add a small turnip to this employment. We can add parsley and teaspoon of mixed savoury herbs. We must add plenty of water at starting, so that the bones and vegetables may be covered. The stewpan or stockpan can be simmered occasionally, and care should be taken to remove all scum which rises early, soon after the bones and vegetables are first put in.

When the soup is boiling, put this in and let it remain in a little while; press the piece of muslin against the surface of the soup, and with a spoonful of the soup and a teaspoonful of the soup and a piece of string to it. As soon as you can clearly detect the flavour of the herbs you can take the piece of muslin out. You must avoid burning the soup to a brownish colour, and at the same time we must avoid having all our soups alike. This is best done, when we are making soup in small quantities, when after the muslin has been added and the soup thickened, but before the sherry is added.
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The fact is, if we put in the herbs before the rice, we probably taste the herbs too strongly, but after the rice was added we should be able to taste the herbs as intended.

Mock Turtle Soup.—In order to have proper mock turtle soup, we shall of course use chicken. Half of a calf's head can be parboiled, and the best part, including the ear, reserved for that very popular dish known as **tête de veau en bécassine**. Mock turtle soup can be made more cheaply from pig's head, and when great pains is taken to allow the soup to simmer and throw up its fat very few persons can tell the difference between chicken and pork turtle. Moreover, very good imitation is made by stewing down one or two calf's feet till the meat on them becomes quite soft and tender and drops from the bone.

Of course in each case the meat is boiled in the stock, and if more water has to be added, before the stock must be reduced by boiling. It is in any case it should be a firm jelly when cold. Mock turtle soup requires more savoury herbs than ox-tail soup, and mixed savoury herbs are sufficient without the addition of any thyme. Each herb should be added conjuring the quantity of a teaspoonful to each half-pint of soup. The soup must be thickened with brown **roux** and flour, and not allow the soup after it has been thickened to come to a boil, or the soup may skin off any grease that may rise, as well as the butter in the **roux**. Add about a table-spoonful of sherry to the soup just before sending it to the table. In fact the sherry is often best added after the soup has been poured into the tureen.

There are many other thick soups that can be made in small quantities by utilizing the remains of other dishes. For instance, we can make gibelot soup by using the giblets of a goose or duck. An ordinary fish soup can make game soup from the carcass of a game or a couple of partridges or a pheasant. In making any kind of game soup, we shall require to have in the house a small bottle of herbes de Provence. This is very different from mixed savoury herbs. It is a brown powder, composed of various mixed herbs and spices. It is known to French men of taste as it was to their ancestors. A bottle will last a year, and is essential for making game pies, salmi of game, game soups.

We can also make mulligattawny soup from the carcass of a fowl instead of a dish of curry, as we suggested in our previous article on *Polynesian Food*.

We next come to a much-neglected variety of soup in this country, viz., vegetable white soup. So cheap, so nice, so nourishing, so easily made, and yet if we look around as among our friends how rarely do we meet with a nice white soup to commence dinner with in summer. Why is this the case? We fear our women cooks are like barrel organs, they can play a certain number of tunes and then they are done. An English woman cook in this country too often owes her knowledge not to experience, but to what she has picked up at certain amount of knowledge of cooking from her mother or from looking at some other cook, and she risks taking a place as a general servant where, comparatively speaking, there is little cooking to do, and where her master and mistress would not know if the result of her cooking was in the right correct thing or not. She settles down into the soul of the face and fancies herself a female Francaisette, till her career is suddenly cut short by her marrying her tailor's servant. When the honeymoon is over she for the first time finds out what real work means.

White soups require white **roux**; and as we have seen, white **roux** in making thick soups, we will have a few words to say first on the subject of brown and white **roux**. We consider a know-

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**Palestine Soup** is made by adding a sufficient quantity of boiled Jerusalem artichokes to make the soup thick. Take, say, a pint of milk and boil it; then add to it a pint of stock and a cupful of Jerusalem artichokes. Let it boil away till it is less in quantity than a tea-cupful, then add the artichokes to this, and then rub the whole through a wire sieve. Thicken the soup with a little white **roux** and give it an additional flavour; but remember that this is making all white soups from vegetables we must depend upon the vegetable itself for the consistency of the soup rather than the artichokes.

**White Soup**.—Plain white soup is made by simply thickening the boiled milk and reduced stock with white **roux**. A little better white soup can be obtained by using less milk and adding a little cream.

**Cariflower Soup** can be made from the remains of cauliflower that has been saved the day before, and resembles bouquets, of the white part of the cauliflower to throw into the soup the last moment. Add all the white part of the cariflower milk and stock that has been slightly thickened with white **roux**, then rub the whole through a wire sieve, and throw in the bowl. Let it stand for a few minutes before sending the soup to the table. This makes the soup more brilliantly thick after using up all the white part of the cauliflower, you must add a little more white **roux**.

**Vegetable Marrow Soup** is made in exactly a similar manner to Palestine soup, the only difference being the substitution of the marrow for the artichokes. As vegetable marrow contains a very large quantity of water, you will have to reduce the soup, after adding the marrow, by boiling in order to get it to a proper consistency.

**Potato Soup** can be made from the remains of potatoes left. When new potatoes are in season, a few of the very small ones like marbles can be reserved to make a soup. As a large potato marrow contains a large quantity of water, you will have to reduce the soup, after adding the marrow, by boiling in order to get it to a proper consistency.

**Celery Soup** is in the opinion of many persons one of the best soups ever sent to the table, the white part only of a large head of celery, and both milk and cream in the milk and reduced stock. Then rub it through a wire sieve, and if the soup is not sufficiently thick add a little more white **roux**.

**Green Pea Soup** can be made from some young peas, preserving, say, half to be thrown into the soup about twenty minutes before serving. The remainder of the pods and the shells must be boiled in the stock, and then all, or as much as possible, rubbed through a wire sieve. The soup must be thickened with a little white **roux** and coloured green with a little spinach juice, or, better still, some green vegetable colouring sold in bottles by all grocers. The rest of the shells and peas should be thrown into the soup while boiling, and the soup sent to table as soon as they are tender.

**Tomato Soup** is made by adding some tomato pulp in bottle to some stock; a little extract of meat may be added. The pulp itself will be sufficient to give the soup its proper colour. Fresh whole tomatoes can be used instead of the pulp. In this case bake the tomatoes in the oven and rub them when tender through a hair sieve. The soup should be cold in theips.

All white soups should be served hot, but the same general principle. We require a small quantity of very good stock reduced almost to a sauce, by the French cook; and we want some milk boiled separately with one bay leaf. We must have in the case of vegetable soups some vegetable in sufficient quantity to make the soup with rubbed through a wire sieve as thick as a purée. A little cream is a great improvement, but it is not absolutely essential.