

Receipts, &c.

ON THE CURING OF HAMS AND BACON.

The general plan of curing hams and bacon may be described as follows: "For each ham of twelve pounds weight, two pounds of common salt, two ounces of saltpetre, quarter of a pound of bay salt, and a quarter of a pound of coarse sugar. The hams to be well rubbed with this mixture, which must be in the finest powder. It is always the best plan to get a man to rub the meat, as a woman's hand is hardly heavy enough to do it effectually; they are then placed in a deep pan, and a wineglass of vinegar is added. They should be turned each day; and for the first three or four should be well rubbed with the brine. After that time it will be sufficient, with a wooden or iron spoon, to well ladle it over the meat. They should remain three weeks in the pickle. When removed from it they must be well wiped, smoked with wood smoke for three weeks, and finally put in brown paper bags."

When we take into consideration the fact that the preservative action of salt is chiefly due to its removing a very large portion of the juices of the flesh, it is obvious that there is a great amount of unnecessary labor in the plans generally followed, more especially if the same result can be obtained in a different manner. Some years since we met with the following directions for salting, which appeared so very superior to those generally given, that we at once put them on trial, and found, as we fully expected, that the result was most satisfactory. They are as follows: Our method, and it is guaranteed by invariable success in producing the finest bacon and hams for some years, without a single failure, is very different. On the ground (assumed) that the action of the curing material is to withdraw from the meat, before putrefaction begins, a portion of its juices, and to put the rest in such condition as to prevent, for a long time, the beginning of that process, otherwise natural to all meat, the meat is placed, while perfectly fresh, upon a stone slab, and covered with a thin layer of brown sugar. After two days this is wiped off, and a thin layer of warm dry salt applied to the whole surface. Very little saltpetre is used. The meat is then turned every day, and all moist salt removed, and dry salt substituted, and the slab kept, all through the curing, as dry as it may be. The meat is never *rubbed*, or should the hand touch it, as in the turning, it may be handled with a dry cloth. In fourteen days, by this method, the bacon of a pig of 200 pounds will be fully cured, and the hams in three weeks to a month. When cured, they are wiped perfectly clean and dry, so as to remove every particle of salt from the surface, and carefully sprinkled with dry flour. If then put into close linen bags, and hung up in a dry place, both hams and bacon keep perfectly sound and good for at least twelve months. The rapid and regular removal of all salt once saturated with the outflowing juices, and its replacement with dry salt, appears to adjust the curative power of the salt to the demands of different parts of the meat, and, by removing at once what might else decompose, and what cannot be supposed to be of any further value, to expedite the process. The rubbing we deem large and needless addition to the necessary labor. Being heated, the salt acts instantly and rapidly upon the outer parts of the meat, and thus secures a perfect commencement of the curing. And the slab (in lieu of the hollow pan), especially if sloped to a receptacle for any escaping liquid, insures, if the meat be turned daily, as much dry-

ness as is practicable. Our plan has, at least, the advantage of keeping "hands off," and dispensing with all hard work. We strongly recommend a trial of this process to all home curers of hams and bacon. G. C.

MISCELLANEOUS COOKING.

ECONOMICAL VEAL SOUP.—Boil a bit of veal that will make a fricassee, pie, or hash; when tender, take out the meat, and slip out the bones; put them back in the kettle, and boil gently two hours; then strain the liquor, and let it remain until next day; when wanted, take off the fat, put the soup into a clean pot, add pepper, salt, an onion, a half teacupful of rice, a tablespoonful of flour mixed in water, dry bread, and potatoes.

BROWN CHICKEN SOUP.—Cut up a nicely-dressed chicken; put it in the pot with water to cover it, which must be measured, and half as much more added to it before the soup is dished. Keep it covered tight, boiling slowly, and take off the fat as fast as it rises. When the chicken is tender, take it from the pot and mince it very fine; season it to the taste, and brown it with butter in a dripping pan. When brown, put it back in the pot. Brown together butter and flour, and make rich gravy, by adding a pint of the soup; stir this in the soup, and season it with a little pepper, salt, and butter. Be careful the chopped chicken does not settle, and burn on the pot. It will be well to turn a small plate on the bottom of the kettle to prevent this. Toast bread quite brown and dry, but do not burn it, and lay the toast in the tureen, and serve it with the soup; stir the chicken through it, and pour it in the tureen.

GREEN MINT SAUCE.—The French use this for boiled lamb. It is made by putting green mint, chopped fine, and parsley, in vinegar.

GIBLET SAUCE.—Take the livers, lights, gizzards, and hearts from fowls. Boil very tender, and chop them fine. Make a nice thin drawn-butter, and stir them in; or boil and chop them, and use the water in which they were boiled; season with butter, pepper, and salt; beat up the yolks of two eggs, add them, and keep the sauce stirring until it thickens. This sauce is best for roast fowls.

FISH CUTLETS.—Take steaks of any large fish; dip them in egg and bread-crums, season with pepper and salt, and fry slowly until done a nice brown.

VEAL FORCEMEAT.—Take of undressed lean veal, freed from skin and sinews, one pound, as much beef or veal suet, and the same quantity of bread-crums; chop fine two drachms of parsley; of lemon-peel, sweet herbs, and onions, each one drachm; half drachm of allspice beaten to a fine powder; and pound the whole in a mortar, adding thereto the yolk and white of an egg; rub the whole well together, and season it with pepper and salt.

QUARTER OF LAMB ROASTED AND LARDED.—Lard the upper side of a fore quarter of lamb with lean bacon, and thickly sprinkle the other side with bread-crums. Cover the meat with paper so that it should not be burnt, and roast it. Take it from the fire when nearly done, and cover the unlarded part once more with bread-crums, season it with salt and finely-chopped parsley, then put the lamb again before a brisk fire to brown it, and serve it up with vinegar poured over it.

RABBIT SOUP.—Cut one or two rabbits into joints; lay them for an hour in cold water; dry and fry them in butter till about half done, with four or five onions, and a middling-sized head of celery cut small; add to this three quarts of cold water, one pound of split peas, some