Receipts, &c.

COOKERY WITH THE ANCIENTS.

COOKERY, the preparation of food from the natural aliments, by dressing, compounding, and the application of heat, an art so universal that some philosopher has defined man to be "a cooking animal." It takes its origin from the necessities of men, who, though omnivorous, are so organized as to require concentrated food, the stomach being too small to carry enough merely vegetable matter to replace the daily waste of the system, excepting in the warmest latitudes.

The philosopher Posidonius was of opinion that the culinary art followed immediately the discovery of fire, and that it was at first an imitation of the natural process of mastication and digestion. "As the seeds," says he, "were ground by the action of the teeth, moistened by the saliva, kneaded, as it were, by the tongue, and fermented, heated, and converted into food in the stomach, as in an oven; so mankind, imitating Nature, bruised their grain with stones, mixed the flour with water, kneaded and formed it into cakes, which they baked in heated ovens." Milton ascribes to the mother of mankind great proficiency in this art:—

"On hospitable thoughts intent,
What choice to choose for delicacy best,
What order so contrived as not to mix
Tastes not well joined, inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste, upheld with kindliest change."

In Biblical antiquity, Abraham entertained the three angels with cakes of fine meal, and with a carefully-dressed, tender, and good calf; Rebecca prepared savory meat for Isaac; the chief butler and chief baker were important officers in the household of Pharaoh; and the children of Israel took kneading-troughs and unleavened dough with them in their march through the wilderness.

In the East, the land of spices, the taste was first tempted by carefully-wrought compositions and condiments, and the first great feasts were given. It was the custom of the ancient Egyptians, as at present in Oriental and tropical climates, to cook the meat as soon as killed, with the same view of having it tender which makes northern people keep it till the approach of decomposition. Beef and goose constituted the principal part of the animal food, though the kid, goat, gazelle, duck, teal, and quail were also well known. Mutton was excluded from a Theban table, and Plutarch says that no Egyptians, except the Lycopolites, would eat the flesh of sheep. The blood of animals was frequently received into a vase for purposes of cookery, and black puddings were popular in Egypt, as they afterwards were in modern Europe, to the horror of the Moslems. One joint, often represented in ancient sculptures and still common at a modern Egyptian table, but totally unlike any European joint, consists of the flesh covering the central part of a bone, the two extremities of which project beyond it. Large supplies of fish were obtained from the Nile and Lake Mœris, and were brought to the table whole, boiled or fried, the tail and fins being removed. Herodotus says that no Egyptian will taste the head of any species of animal. Boiling and roasting were the only processes, until in the reign of King Menes various styles of artificial cookery were introduced. The boiling appears from representations in sculpture to have been done in caldrons, supported on stones or tripods, and heated either by fagots of wood or by charcoal. The vegetables which abound in Egypt made a large part of the ordinary food, and they were eaten raw, stewed, boiled, or roasted in ashes. The workmen who built the pyramids are described as living on *raphanus* (a sort of turnip-radish), onions, and garlic; lentils also were then, as now, a principal article of diet. In the nummulite rock near these monuments there are imbedded testacea resembling small seeds, which were supposed by Strabo to be the petrified residue of lentils left there by laboring people. During the inundations of the Nile the lotus and papyrus, like the acorn in the northern climates, were the chief aliment of the poor. Dates, figs, grapes, onions, gourds, cucumbers, water-melons, and leeks were favorite fruits, some of which were regretted by the Israelites after they left the country. Onions, however, were prohibited to the priests. Bread was made either of wheat or of barley, and the dough was sometimes kneaded with the feet in a wooden bowl on the ground. Pastry was made to represent a three-cornered cake, a crocodile's head, a recumbent ox, a leaf, a heart, or various other objects, according to the fancy of the confectioner, and was sprinkled with seeds of caraway, cummin, or sesame. The lotus blossom was a common ornament upon kitchen and table furniture.

The Greeks raised every department of cookery to a character of high art. Prometheus is said to have first slaughtered cattle for culinary purposes. Ceus to have killed the first hog, and Bacchus to have struck down the first deer, in order to save from its fangs his young vines. In the rude simplicity of the Homeric age, royal personages prepared their own meats, and Menelaus, at the marriage feast of Hermione, placed before the guests with his own hands the roasted side of an ox. Achilles, with the assistance of Patroclus, feasted the Argive leaders upon the shoulders of lambs, a fat doe, and a succulent pig, which were broiled on live coals, and garnished with the entrails of oxen—dishes, according to Athenæus, "consecrated to the gods, and usual at all the feasts of the brave." Though Ulysses boasted his skill in the culinary art, the Homeric heroes seem to have had no conception of the refinements to which their luxurious successors attained. They were contented with plain roasts, seldom boiling their meat or dressing it with sauces. Professional cooks had come into existence before the age of Pericles, and carried their art to masterly perfection. They could serve up a whole pig dexterously boiled on one side, roasted on the other, and stuffed with flavored and spiced thrushes, eggs, and various delicacies, so that the guest could not discover where the animal had been divided. Being asked to explain one of his processes, an Athenian cook solemnly swore by the manes of those who died at Marathon and Salamis that he would not reveal his secret that year.

MISCELLANEOUS COOKING.

Oyster Forcemeat.—Open carefully a dozen fine plump natives, take off the beards, strain the liquor, and rinse the oysters in it. Grate four ounces crum of a stale loaf into fine light crums, mince the oysters, but not too small, and mix them with the bread; add one and a half ounce of good butter, broken into minute bits, the grated rind of half a small lemon, a small salt-spoonful of pounded mace, some Cayenne, a little salt, and a large teaspoonful of parsley; mix these ingredients well, and work them together with the unbeaten yelk of one egg, and a little oyster liquor, the remainder of which can be added to the sauce which usually accompanies this forcemeat.

Stewed Shoulder of Mutton.—The following receipt is a useful one, as it gives a little variety to a very homely joint. The shoulder of mutton must not be

Receipts, &c.

COOKERY WITH THE ANCIENTS.

(Concluded from last month.)

PAINTING, sculpture, music, and dancing were all placed under contribution to add to the gayety and splendor of festivals, at which philosophers and poets discussed and sang. To invent a popular cake or a poignant sauce was a worthy object of ingenuity and erudition. Thus Aristoxenes, after many trials, succeeded in a peculiar way of seasoning hams, which were hence called Aristoxenians; as afterwards the Roman Apicius, one of the three gastronomers of that name, devised a sort of cakes which were termed Apicians. Among the most esteemed delicacies of the Greeks were the kids from Melos, the head of the conger from Sicyon, the whiting from Megara, the eel from Lake Copais, the scaly orb-fish, caught only by moonlight, the apples of Eubœa, the dates of Phœnicia, the quinces of Corinth, the almonds of Naxos, goldfishes, sparrows, and robins. Galen praises the flesh of young foxes in autumn when they feed on grapes, and Hippocrates esteemed the flesh of puppies equal to that of birds. Nearly all the Athenian dishes were prepared with a mixture of assafetida or rue, and one of the most popular was a composition of cheese, garlic, and eggs.

Though cheese was claimed as the invention of Aristæus, King of Arcadia, yet, as it had long been known to the Hebrews, it may have been introduced from them among the Greeks. In Bithynia a salad was made of it, by uniting it with slices of bread, soaked in vinegar and water, and mixed with mint, garlic, and green coriander. At Athens cheese was a part of the diet of athletes, and was always included among the munitions of war. That made from the camel's milk was, according to Aristotle, in the highest esteem.

Butter was hardly known to the Greeks in the time of Aristotle, though half a century later a brisk trade was driven with the barbarians who furnished it. Both the Greeks and Romans extracted delicacies from the tough membranous parts of the matrices of sows, the flesh of young asses and young hawks, and from a great variety of sea-fish, as the dog-fish, star-fish, porpoises, seals, and especially from two species termed the *echinus* and the *glociscus*. The Syracusans were especially noted for their gastronomical successes, while the Spartans, despising luxury of all kinds, had the term of reproach "to live like a Syracusan." A certain Sybarite, after tasting the Lacedæmonian black broth, declared himself no longer astonished that the Spartans were so fearless of death in battle, since the pains of dissolution were preferable to those of existence on such execrable food.

The poet Archestratus, a culinary philosopher of Syracuse, travelled through the most fertile lands known to the ancients, crossing many seas, and passing through may dangers and hardships, in order to add edibles and potables from every climate to the Greek table luxuries. His *Gastrology*, a didactic poem in which he promulgated the result of his researches, like a legislator dictating a code of laws, became the authoritative creed of Greek epicures. It was a favorite exercise of the most accomplished cooks, when rare and choice fish were wanting, to imitate their flavor, taste, and form so closely from inferior varieties that the most experienced gourmand could not distinguish the fraud.

Philoxenus wished that he possessed a crane's neck, that he might be the longer in enjoying his dainties. He is said to have disciplined himself by the hot bath and by drinking scalding water till he could swallow the hottest dishes, and then by bribing the cooks to serve up the repast at boiling-heat, he was able to devour what he pleased before his fellow-guests ventured to touch a dish; whence they styled him "an oven, and not a man." The Greeks excelled in sweetmeats, fruits, and the artistic ornaments and order of an entertainment, but the Romans in the more solid dishes, in learned sauces, in extravagant splendor, and in gastronomical excesses and absurdities.

MISCELLANEOUS COOKING.

Choice Fowl Pudding.—Take a cold fowl and mince it, cutting it into small square pieces. Make a white sauce with a small piece of butter, some flour, and cream or milk. Put the mince into the white sauce, and set it aside to cool. When quite cold, make up into balls. Cover them with egg and bread-crums; do this twice, to prevent them from bursting. At dinner-time, fry them in hot lard or dripping; serve them up on a serviette; garnish with parsley.

Potted Calves' Feet.—Boil the feet for five hours; flavor half a pint of the jelly in which they are boiled with nutmeg, garlic, and pounded ham, and let them simmer together for a few minutes; cut up the feet into small pieces and season them; dip a mould into cold water, and put in the meat, mixed with a little grated lemon-peel and minced parsley. Some persons add beet-root, baked or boiled, cut in slices and mixed with the meat. When this is arranged in the mould, fill up with the flavored jelly. Turn out when quite cold. The remainder of the jelly in which the feet were boiled can be used as a sweet jelly.

Loin, Neck, and Breast of Lamb.—A loin of lamb will be roasted in about an hour and a quarter; a neck in an hour; and a breast in three-quarters of an hour. Do not forget to salt and flour these joints about twenty minutes before they are done.

Gravy for Fowls, or other Delicate Dishes.—Take half a pound of lean beef, slice and score it, and a piece of butter the size of a nutmeg. Sprinkle it with flour; add a small onion, then put it all into a stewpan. Stir it round over the fire for ten minutes; then pour into it one pint of boiling water; skim it carefully; let it all boil together for five minutes; strain it, and it is ready.

To Fricassee Small Chickens.—Cut off the wings and legs of four chickens; separate the breasts from the backs; divide the backs crosswise; cut off the necks; clean the gizzards; put them with the livers and other parts of the chickens, after being thoroughly washed, into a saucepan; add salt, pepper, and a little mace; cover with water, and stew till tender. Take them up; thicken half a pint of water with two spoonfuls of flour rubbed into four ounces of butter; add a tumbler of new milk; boil all together a few minutes, then add eight spoonfuls of white wine, stirring it in carefully, so as not to curdle; put in the chickens, and shake the pan until they are sufficiently heated; then serve them up.

Soup for the Million.—Put the bones, skin, and all the rough residue of any joint, into a saucepan, with a quart and half a pint of cold water, one large carrot, scraped and cut up, two large onions, sliced and fried brown in one ounce of butter; and one *very small* head of celery washed and cut up. Let it stew for two hours; then add three medium-sized potatoes, peeled; a saltspoonful of salt; half a saltspoonful of pepper, and half a saltspoonful of mustard. Let it simmer three-quarters of an hour longer. Take out the bones and then rub the whole through a sieve.