



CONDUCTED BY LAURA LATHROP.

### BREAKFAST AND TEA.

AT this season of the year, it is often a perplexing question with the conscientious housekeeper, what to provide for these two important meals. In many homes, nothing hot is served for the last meal but the veritable tea itself; while breakfast is the merest apology in the world. This is contrary to all the demands of our nature. At the first and the last meal, the stomach craves something hot and substantial, or at least relishable. This will not entail any added expenditure. A little forethought, a little management on the day previous, will secure rich results. Indeed, some of our most satisfactory dishes are the made-over products of otherwise unavailable fragments of the table. In no way can the housewife display so much ingenuity and culinary skill as in the invention and compounding of this class of dainties.

A well-known artist when asked by a lady how he mixed his paints, in order to produce such grand effects, replied: "With brains, madam, with brains." It has been practically demonstrated that brains are just as essential in the art of cookery. Many dishes, which serve only to repel, might be rendered particularly inviting, if this desirable accompaniment were called oftener into requisition.

To no summons do we respond with such variable appetites, as at breakfast. After a protracted fast, the stomach is in an exhausted condition, and the judicious manager will make special provision for the repast, which precedes the hours devoted usually to the most arduous labor of the day. Still, no other is in so much danger of being slighted. In the hurry of the morning, its importance is totally ignored or overlooked. How is one to develop any degree of energy—mental, moral, or physical—for life's ever pressing duties, with no other reinforcement of the "inner man," than the regulation breakfast of numberless homes—A cup of

indifferent coffee, its aroma a thing of the past, its temperature a matter of chance; a slice of toast, and perhaps a little left-over cold meat.

Well-fed people know little of the craving for stimulants, that follows the scanty meal of the poor laborer, doomed to earn his daily loaf by the sweat of his brow, while his overtaxed muscles enter weary protest as the hours drag slowly along. Let wives and mothers beware lest their careless provision for the morning, subject husbands and sons to the same direful temptation. Make good coffee. While tastes differ in regard to strength, few fail to recognize that deliciousness of flavor which, to the lover of this cheering beverage, constitutes its principal charm. Serve it piping hot. If you cannot afford cream, scald the milk and serve it hot; cold milk with spoil the most delicious coffee. Study variety. If eggs are served, send them to table in a different form for every day of the week. Do not fall into the rut of always boiling them in the shell because "it is so easy." Always serve them *hot*. Cold boiled potatoes may be served in many acceptable variations from the too common mode of simply sliced and fried. Even hash, though oft abused, offers a fair field to her who seeks variety. Of course, it is understood that the fragments from individual plates never enter into the composition of made-over dishes. In conclusion, we offer the suggestion that if the same attention is given to two or three well cooked and properly seasoned dishes that is sometimes divided among half a dozen, a greater degree of satisfaction will be the result.

#### A Few Nice Dishes for Breakfast and Tea.

HAM OMELET.—First make a plain omelet, which is the foundation for many delicious dishes. This is done by beating four eggs, to which are added half a teaspoonful of



salt, a pinch of pepper and three tablespoonfuls of milk or cream, water may be substituted if necessary. Put a tablespoonful of butter into a frying-pan, and when hot pour in the mixture, shake rapidly until as thick as cream, then move to a cooler part of the stove to brown. In a few seconds roll the omelet, or fold one side over upon the other. For the ham omelet have ready heated upon the stove, half a cup of finely minced cold ham, seasoned with pepper, and slightly moistened with a tablespoonful of stock or a little butter and hot water. Spread upon half the omelet. Fold the other side upon this, turn out upon a hot dish and serve immediately.

**CHEESE OMELET.**—This is made by grating fine enough cheese for half a teacupful. Spread upon half the omelet, fold, and serve hot.

**OYSTER OMELET.**—Bring almost to the boiling point in their own liquor; remove, chop fine, and season with pepper, salt and butter, with a tablespoonful of the liquor. Spread and serve, either folded or rolled, and very hot. Mushrooms minced, cold boiled fowl, or veal prepared in this way, make delicious omelets.

**SCRAMBLED HAM AND EGGS.**—Mince fine any bits of cold boiled or fried ham; add to a teacupful six beaten eggs, and a generous pinch of pepper. Have ready in a frying-pan a tablespoonful of melted butter or drippings; turn in the mixture and stir carefully until as thick as soft custard. Turn out in a hot dish and serve at once.

**HAM CAKES.**—To one and a half teacupfuls of well seasoned mashed potato, add a teacupful of finely minced cold boiled or fried ham, with a pinch of pepper. Shape into thin round cakes, and fry in hot butter or drippings to a nice brown on both sides. Remnants of roast or boiled veal, mutton or fowl may be utilized this way, changing the name to correspond with the meat which forms the basis.

**SWEET POTATO CROQUETTES.**—Mash boiled sweet potatoes enough to make two teacupfuls; add a beaten egg, a tablespoonful of butter, half a teacupful of heated milk, a teaspoonful of salt, and a fourth of a teaspoonful of pepper. Shape into rolls three inches in length, and a little more than an inch in diameter. In a dish have ready a

beaten egg; roll the croquettes in the egg, then in bread or cracker crumbs. Fry a nice brown in hot drippings. When steaming sweet potatoes preparatory to baking them, add a few more than required for baking. Next morning, slice lengthwise, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and fry a rich brown in butter.

**BROWNE POTATOES.**—Mince enough cold boiled potatoes to make four teacupfuls; add a cup of stock, let come to a boil, then stir in one tablespoonful of butter mixed to a paste with a tablespoonful of flour. Season highly with salt and pepper; let boil one or two minutes, and set aside. Put two tablespoonfuls of melted butter or drippings into a spider, and when hot turn in the potatoes, and set where they will brown nicely. In about fifteen minutes they will be done. Loosen carefully, and fold or turn out whole upon a hot dish. Water or any nice left over meat gravy may take the place of stock.

**CREAMED POTATOES.**—Use either chopped cold boiled potatoes, or minced raw ones stewed for fifteen minutes in water and drained. For each quart, use one-half a teacupful of cream or milk, a generous tablespoonful of butter rubbed to a paste with a teaspoonful of flour; season well with salt and pepper. Serve smoking hot.

**ESCALOPED SALMON.**—Remove the skin and bone from cold boiled salmon. To one pound of this, or to a pound of canned salmon, add half a pound of cracker or bread crumbs, two tablespoonfuls of cream or rich milk, two eggs well beaten, a tablespoonful of lemon juice or nice vinegar, and one-fourth of a teaspoonful of pepper. Butter an earthen baking-dish, press the mixture down in it, cover the top lightly with crumbs, moisten with a little cream, dot with bits of butter, and bake in a quick oven for half an hour. It should be nicely browned. Serve in the dish in which it is baked, with a napkin pinned neatly around it, or set in the silver dishes which are used expressly for that purpose. Cold veal is nice prepared in this manner, and either dish is most excellent served with pickled mushrooms or mushroom chow-chow. Of the last two named dishes the housewife should be careful to provide a liberal supply when in season, as the flavor imparted to many dishes by their addition, is indescribably delicious.



**SPONGE CAKE FRITTERS.**—Cut stale sponge cake into small oblong pieces half an inch in thickness. Lay for a few moments in any nice fruit juice that may be left over from your last can; sprinkle both sides with flour and fry a light brown in nice fresh butter. If a layer of jam or preserve is spread over them, it is a decided improvement. Cold plum pudding sliced in the same way, dipped in a nice batter and fried slowly, forms a delightful variety of fritter.

**SPONGE CAKE TOAST.**—Slices of stale sponge cake toasted a delicate brown before a brisk heat, forms a delicate and acceptable accompaniment to good coffee for breakfast. Sponge cake is one of the least expensive and most easily made cakes, and if desired, we will furnish directions which we consider unailing.

**EGGLESS CAKE.**—This is really an excellent cake, and affords the housewife the opportunity to reserve eggs for dishes in which they are a necessity. Beat together one and a half cups sugar, one-half cup of butter, one cup of sour milk, to which is added one level teaspoonful of good soda, three level cups of sifted flour, one-half teaspoonful each of nutmeg and cinnamon, and a teacupful of chopped and floured raisins. Bake in moderate oven.

#### Timely Topics.

**BLACKING COOK STOVES.**—This operation should not be repeated oftener than once a month, and should always be preceded by a thorough washing with soap and water. If coat upon coat is applied, a crust forms, which scales off leaving a rough broken surface. The sides and hearth should only be washed with hot soap-suds, and well brushed

to avoid soiling clothing. Black only those parts exposed to greatest heat. The top may be kept bright between the regular blackings by rubbing with a damp cloth and polishing with the brush. Grease and particles of food spilled upon it should be quickly wiped off with a damp stove cloth. If neglected and burned in, rub with a cloth saturated with kerosene. If your stove has polished edges, a washing of soap suds followed by a brisk rubbing with scouring brick will keep it smooth and bright. Never black it. Turpentine or kerosene will keep the nickel bright. Never bring the can containing either near the fire. If nickel is much stained, spread on a coat of sapolio, after a few moments remove, and rub with turpentine. Stove blacking mixed with turpentine to the consistency of thick sweet cream, and applied with a cloth, makes a lasting blacking susceptible of a high polish, by simply rubbing with a soft woolen cloth; a heavy, padded woolen mitten is nice for the purpose. Simply rubbing top and hearth every morning with heavy brown paper, will keep a stove looking "as weel a'most as new."

**THE CARE OF FRYING PANS.**—These soon lose their high polish, and should be scoured whenever soap and water fail to remove traces of fat and food. Sapolio is excellent for the purpose, but is more expensive than simple scouring brick and soap which answers every purpose. If food is accidentally burned in it, turn in a teacupful of vinegar, with a fourth of a cup of salt; let boil for five minutes, remove, wash with soap and water and polish with scouring brick. Dry coarse salt sometimes answers admirably for scouring pans. A separate pan should be kept with nicest care for omelets.

