



CONDUCTED BY LAURA LATHROP.

### FISH: MANNER OF PREPARING AND COOKING THEM

**T**HE manner in which a fish should be cooked, depends partly upon its size, and largely upon a knowledge of its qualities. A large fish should, usually, be baked or boiled, while a small one may be broiled or fried. The lighter in quality the more variety of modes in which it may be cooked; it may also be served more frequently without one's tiring of it. It is better, therefore, to avoid having the richer varieties frequently. Choose the poorer kinds, and serve in a variety of ways, being careful to furnish a richer sauce with them than is necessary for salmon, mackerel, etc. Fish that live chiefly at the bottom of lakes and rivers usually have a muddy taste. This may be removed by soaking in very cold salted water for several hours before boiling; and, if during the boiling process, a half of a teacupful of vinegar be added, no trace of the muddy flavor will be detected, and no acidity will be imparted by its use. Lemon juice is always a desirable addition, no matter what the mode of cooking. It adds flavor, besides whitening the flakes, and rendering them firm. In boiling fish, some things will only be learned by experience. If they are put into cold water to boil, it extracts the rich juices, rendering the flavor comparatively insipid. But again, many of the delicate skinned varieties are ruined in appearance by being plunged immediately into boiling water, as it cracks the skin. Striped bass, mackerel, trout, etc., belong to this class, and should be placed in the fish-kettle with only half enough cold water to cover, and boiling water added gradually until the fish is covered. The skin contracts more slowly by this process, and does not break. The tougher skinned kinds, like sturgeon, halibut, etc., should have the skin removed after boiling, and before sending to the table. Never allow a fish to boil rapidly. It breaks during the cooking, and can not be served neatly. The water should simply bubble slightly.

In baking fish, baste frequently to render the dish a success; use salt generously, adding it to the water in the pan. Be liberal, also, with salt, when fish are breaded for frying. Small smelts are frequently rolled in flour and fried whole, in olive oil or butter, like small brook trout, without previous cleaning, aside from a careful washing and wiping of the outside. These are not more than two and a half inches in length, and come into market in the latter part of February from New Jersey. Larger ones, dressed in the usual manner, are delicious if dipped into melted butter, to which one-fourth of its quantity of lemon juice is added, with the requisite amount of salt and pepper, then rolled in flour or white Indian meal, and fried in butter and nice sweet lard mixed, one part of the latter to two of the former. Salmon are in season, and shad are also brought in. Those from the Connecticut River appearing, about the first of April, being superior in size and quality, from some peculiarity of the water or their food. These, with halibut, are best boiled, as flesh is rather dry, but may be baked if properly prepared, and should be served with a rich dressing of melted butter. Cod of one and a half pounds weight are best, if wanted for broiling, and are much esteemed for chowder; especially, if a deep sea cod, which excels in solidity of flakes. For the benefit of those who are fond of fish chowder, we append the famous recipe of Daniel Webster. He, by the way, was notably fond of fish. Whether this accounts for his wonderful brain-power, we are unable to say; but, from all statistical estimates, fish holds high rank as a brain food, being rich in that acknowledged essential—phosphorus. This fact, added to its use by all classes, especially now, when the Lenten season calls it into frequent requisition, has suggested the insertion of a few choice and economical recipes, among which, we hope the busy housewife—too busy to

stop to think— may find the variety which will prevent the frequent appearance of fish upon her table from palling the appetite, when it may as easily proved a continued source of gratification. In the *rechauffées*, or made-over dishes, she will find a means of utilizing the remnants, and thereby serving some tastes more acceptably than with the freshly cooked product.

**DANIEL WEBSTER'S RECIPE FOR CODFISH CHOWDER.**—A fresh codfish weighing six pounds forms the basis. To this add four tablespoonfuls of onion previously fried with salt pork; one and a half pounds of sea biscuit, broken into bits; one quart of well-mashed boiled potatoes; one teaspoonful of thyme, and one of summer savory; half a bottle of mushroom catsup; one teacupful of pure cider vinegar; half a nutmeg grated; a little mace tied in a coarse cloth, with a few cloves and grains of allspice; twenty-five oysters; a little black pepper, and three slices of lemon. Put all into a granite or enameled kettle; cover with an inch of water, boil gently for one hour, stirring carefully to prevent burning. This is given with the omission of but one ingredient (not essential), for which we have substituted vinegar, not impairing the quality in the least.

**BOILED HALIBUT.**—Pour boiling water into a shallow pan until about a third of an inch deep, and lay in it for two minutes a four or five-pound piece of halibut with the black skin down; at the end of that time remove it from the water, scrape the black substance from the skin, wash the fish in cold water, then lay it on a plate, which set in a stew-pan and cover with boiling water. Add a tablespoonful each of vinegar and salt, and a small onion. Boil gently for forty-five minutes and serve with white sauce.

**WHITE SAUCE.**—Put three tablespoonfuls of butter into a frying-pan with one of chopped onion, one of chopped carrot, same of chopped celery, and a sprig each of thyme and parsley. Simmer for ten minutes, not allowing it to brown; then add three tablespoonfuls of flour and stir until smooth and frothy. Add gradually a pint of white stock, stirring constantly. Season with salt and pepper, boil five minutes; add half a cup of cream or rich milk, boil up once; strain and serve.

**BAKED HALIBUT.**—Remove the black sub-

stance from the skin as directed for boiling. Score the fish about half an inch deep and put a long narrow strip of salt pork into each cut. Dredge well with salt, pepper and flour; baste frequently with the boiling water in the pan; finally baste with melted butter, dredge with flour and let it become a rich brown. Bake for one hour. Serve with tomato or oyster sauce.

**TOMATO SAUCE.**—Simmer a slice of onion in three tablespoonfuls of butter for ten minutes; add two tablespoonfuls of flour as directed for white sauce, then one teacupful of stock; stir smooth, then add two teacupfuls of boiled and strained tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper, simmer ten minutes, strain and serve.

**OYSTER SAUCE.**—Use a teacupful of chicken or veal stock; prepare butter and flour as above; add stock. Have ready a pint of oysters heated to the boiling point in their own liquor; add liquor to sauce. Boil ten minutes; add oysters, salt, pepper, and tablespoonful of lemon juice. Serve hot.

**ESCALOPED HALIBUT.**—Free cold left-over halibut of skin and bones, and break up into flakes with a fork; sprinkle a pint of flakes with a teaspoonful of salt and a pinch of pepper. Heat one and a half cupfuls of rich milk or cream to the boiling point. Stir into it a tablespoonful of flour rubbed into a tablespoonful of butter; let simmer a minute and add a half teaspoonful of onion juice, and a pinch of pepper. Now put a thin layer of fish into an earthen or escalop dish, and follow with a layer of sauce, then a layer of fish and of sauce. Sprinkle with grated bread crumbs or cracker crumbs; give a light sprinkling of salt (scant half teaspoonful), dot with bits of butter, and bake in rather hot oven for fifteen minutes. Serve hot. Mushroom chow-chow, or pickled mushrooms form a fine accompaniment, either of which may be put up at home when mushrooms are plentiful, and will keep all winter.

**BAKED SALT MACKEREL.**—Soak over night in plenty of cold water. Lay on its back in baking-pan; pour over it two teacupfuls of sweet milk. Bake for twenty minutes, and then add to the milk in the pan the remaining ingredients for cream sauce.

**FISH IN AMBUSH.**—For each pint of cold fish, free of skin and bones, allow a teacup-

ful of egg sauce and a quart of mashed potato. If sufficient egg sauce is not left over, add milk to make up the deficiency. Put a thin layer of potato in an escalop dish; spread over this the fish well seasoned with salt and pepper. Pour over this the sauce; add the remaining potato, spread a tablespoonful of melted butter over the surface, and bake in a hot oven for twenty minutes.

**BAKED SHAD.** — Cut the fish sufficiently to take out the roe. Wash the fish and fill with dressing and bake as directed for salmon in December number. Serve the roe on a small platter, giving to each person a portion with his fish, or reserve for a breakfast dish.

**SHAD ROE FRIED.** — Wash and boil in salted water for ten minutes; lay in cold water for ten minutes more. Cut in slices half an inch thick; sprinkle these with salt, pepper, and juice of a lemon—this for roe from two fishes. Now dip in beaten egg, then cracker or bread crumbs, and fry in hot lard for five minutes.

**SPICED SALMON.** — Prepare salmon left from dinner as directed for halibut. For each pint, place in a sauce-pan, a half teacupful of vinegar, two tablespoonfuls lemon juice, a teaspoonful of salt, a pinch of pepper, three cloves, and a small piece of cinnamon; when it boils, pour over the fish, cover, and set in a cool place; will keep a week. Any rich fish may be prepared in the same way. Canned salmon may be prepared in this way, and may also be escaloped as directed for cold halibut. Most of the salted varieties of fish make nice *rechauffés* if thoroughly soaked in cold water previous to boiling, and by omitting salt in the dressing.

#### What Some Housekeepers Would Like to Know.

**HOW TO OBTAIN ONION JUICE.** — Peel an onion, and quarter it. Put one or two pieces at a time, into a wooden lemon-squeezer, and squeeze "with a will." One large juicy onion will furnish two tablespoonfuls. Or grate the onion, and press out juice by pressing through a clean, coarse cloth, dipped in cold water.

**HOW TO REMOVE THE ODOR OF FISH, ONIONS, ETC., FROM UTENSILS.** — Wash with

soap and water, then fill them with cold water; add a tablespoonful of washing-soda for each quart of water. Let come to the boiling point, empty and rinse the utensils with clear warm water, wipe dry, and it will be perfectly sweet.

**AN EASY WAY TO USE SMALL PIECES OF SOAP.** — Procure a soap-shaker, which is like a wire corn-popper on a small scale. All the small pieces can be used in this, and there is no trouble about soap sticking to the dishes. It is simply shaken back and forth in the water until enough is added.

#### Replies to Domestic Queries.

**IN** reply to Ada L., rubber gloves, which are very substantial, afford good protection to the hands while the wearer is washing dishes or doing such work as tends to roughen them. After using common soap, rinse the hands in vinegar and sweet milk—one tablespoonful of vinegar to two of milk. After bathing the hands, dry well and dust them with oatmeal. The following well-known recipe is excellent for whitening and softening the hands: Scrape perfectly fine two cakes of brown Windsor soap, mix with it two ounces of lemon juice and same of cologne. Form into a cake, and let it dry twenty-four hours before using to wash the hands.

"SUBSCRIBER" wishes to know how to serve olives, and when? The most approved way is to drain them and lay them on a bed of broken ice in a fancy dish. They are served at luncheons, dinners and suppers, and are usually placed on the table at the beginning of the meal, and remain to the end. Small covered dishes in pretty designs are used for serving sardines. Drain the oil from them; place them in the dish and cover with fresh olive oil or not as you choose. Tastes differ in this point. Place a dish of quartered lemons near the sardines.

This department is open to queries, and correspondence on domestic topics. All communications should be plainly written, one side of the paper only.

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