



CONDUCTED BY LAURA WILLIS LATHROP.

BEVERAGES AND BREAKFAST BREADS.

COFFEE.—We head the list of beverages with coffee, as it justly holds first rank with the majority of all classes. While formerly it was considered a luxury, confined to the tables of the wealthy, it is now deemed a necessity, rendering adequate the scanty bill of fare of even the poor day laborer, sufficing at once for both meat and drink. To the lover of it, a *perfect* cup of coffee is the embodiment of all excellence. While tastes differ as to the proper degree of strength, a fine flavor meets a universal and instantaneous approval.

To secure this important *desideratum*, it is essential that the coffee-pot be perfectly clean. The grounds should be emptied after each meal, the pot thoroughly scalded and dried. If it is filled with boiling water to which a tablespoonful of soda has been added, and allowed to boil for fifteen or twenty minutes, about once a week, it will be always bright and sweet. One of granite or porcelain is preferable to tin, unless the latter is bright and "good as new." When the tin is worn off the inner surface, the action of the tannin contained in coffee upon the exposed iron, renders the product neither healthful nor palatable. Freshly roasted coffee (if properly done) yields a most delightful beverage. Some housewives—notably the Germans, who excel in this art—roast each morning's supply as needed. This involves considerable extra labor, and the work is so well done by many large establishments, that if one will secure a good quality, and place it in the oven a few minutes, as needed, to heat thoroughly and take on an added shade of brown, it will bring out the aroma more fully, and render it crisp and easy to grind. Now as to filtering, boiling, and non-boiling methods. A skillful and painstaking cook will produce really excellent coffee by any of the methods, provided the boiling is not carried beyond two or three minutes. One of our so-called best authorities on culinary

matters gives explicit directions to boil the coffee as briskly as possible without boiling over, for twenty minutes. But the majority of best authorities agree with physicians that actual boiling dissipates the fragrant volatile oil which furnishes the aroma, and extracts the tannin so hurtful to digestion and destructive to fine flavor. For while the process yields a strong product, the coveted aroma has escaped, pervading the house and the entire neighborhood, in fact regaling the passer-by, while you are drinking the bitter decoction which remains for your portion. We have tried various forms of coffee-pots, from the percolator down to the most ordinary, and feel satisfied that perfect coffee may be made in any pot, or cup which is as clean as the cup from which you expect to drink it. A clear bright infusion is most healthful and exhilarating. Intense heat is necessary, but while the water must be boiling when poured on the coffee, it must not boil afterward, but stand on some part of the stove where it will maintain a temperature as near the boiling point as possible without boiling, for ten minutes. Use freshly boiled water if you would have bright coffee. If made in a pot without a strainer, it should be stirred for about two minutes, to cause the grounds to settle. At the end of ten minutes if poured off carefully, it will be found clear as wine. An easier way is to tie the coffee very loosely in a small bag of tarlatan or something equally loose in texture. See that the cover of the pot fits closely. Cork up the spout tightly and enjoy a beverage as clear and sparkling as can be produced, and without the addition of egg, shells, or any other "clearing" agent. Cream, instead of milk, should be added, but if the latter only is available, heat it to the boiling point, but do not allow it to boil. A tablespoonful of finely ground coffee is sufficient for each cup, if you wish it very strong, if not, two table-

spoonfuls for every three cups, is about the right proportion. Avoid *outré*, or extravagant sizes in coffee cups, as well as the diminutive tea cups, which are not many removes from the microscopic.

How to MAKE TEA.—A cup of really good tea is a rarity. Not from the difficulty attending its preparation, for nothing can be simpler. Avoid the coarse "Japan" tea, so commonly used. It is the poorest economy, involving the use of a double amount, and yielding a beverage of most inferior quality. Medium-priced teas are more satisfactory in every respect, and a fine flavor is secured by mixing three parts of black tea with one of green. Use a teapot of either earthen, china, or silver ware. Pour boiling water into it, and let it stand long enough to heat the pot thoroughly. Pour it out, and if you do not like strong tea, allow a pinch of tea for each cup, but if you do, add a teaspoonful for each half pint of water. Pour on half a cup of boiling water, not water which has boiled, and fallen several degrees below the boiling point. Cover the teapot with a napkin or "cosey," and allow it to stand five minutes. Then pour in the necessary quantity of boiling water, and send immediately to table. English breakfast tea requires steeping for two or three minutes longer. Serve within two minutes, and you have the aroma of the herb in all its deliciousness. This is wasted in the process of boiling, leaving only the bitter principle of the tannin. It is quite a popular fancy to serve tea in old blue china. A slice of lemon floating on the surface converts it into Russian tea, and it must be served so hot that only a Russian can drink it. This form of tea should be served either in glass cups or in regular Russian tea cups that stand in a silver frame.

CHOCOLATE.—Scrape two ounces of plain chocolate, and add to it three tablespoonfuls of boiling water. Stir over the fire until it is perfectly smooth, then stir it into one quart of boiling milk. Do not allow it to boil, but churn it steadily with a syllabub-churn, or beat with a whisk until it is nicely frothed. Pour into a hot chocolate pitcher, and serve immediately. Half water may be used, and if you are fond of strong chocolate, add four ounces of the grated material. It must afterward be sweetened to suit individual

tastes. Lovely chocolate sets come especially for the purpose. A tablespoonful of whipped cream, sweetened and slightly flavored with vanilla, placed on the surface of each cup, is a very pleasing addition.

BROMA.—To one heaping tablespoonful of broma, add gradually one-half cup of boiling water, stirring all the time. Add a tablespoonful of sugar, and a pint of hot milk. Stir until the mixture boils, and serve immediately.

COCOA.—Breakfast cocoa, or that made from ground cocoa is prepared precisely like broma. When made from cocoa shells or cocoa nibs (which are the broken beans), add one cup of shells and a tablespoonful of cracked cocoa to three pints of boiling water. Boil gently for two or three hours. Add a teacupful of hot milk, and sweeten to taste.

BREAKFAST breads include muffins, coffee, or cinnamon bread, biscuits, griddle-cakes, Sally Lunn, and various other forms, which when served hot, are so popular at this meal, and form so great an aid in securing variety. That many denounce them as unwholesome, is largely due to the fact that they are so often carelessly and improperly prepared. Well people may partake of them freely, if light and properly baked.

GERMAN COFFEE CAKE OR CINNAMON BREAD.—Prepare at evening a sponge by adding to one quart of warm sweet milk, a half teacupful of good yeast and three generous pints of flour. Set in warm place to rise. In the morning add one small cup of sweet lard or butter, one cup of sugar, two eggs, one-half of a nutmeg, and a scant teaspoonful of salt, with flour sufficient to permit kneading same as bread. Have dough as soft as convenient for handling. Knead well for fifteen minutes, and set in warm place to rise. When light, roll it out in sheets about an inch thick, let rise to double the thickness. Dot the top with bits of butter, and sprinkle sugar and ground cinnamon over it. Bake in a moderately brisk oven. It should bake in from one-half to three-quarters of an hour. If the top browns before it is done, lay a buttered white paper over it. Raisins may be added if desired. This cake may be made of light bread dough by adding the ingredients given for morning. This bread forms a delightful accompaniment to good coffee. The recipe has proved valuable for

many years and was obtained from a friend celebrated for her success in this line.

—DELIGHTFUL BISCUITS. — Sift together one quart (rounded measure) of flour, one teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of sugar, and three teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Into this rub two tablespoonfuls of nice lard, butter, or drippings. Add one pint of sweet milk. This will make a soft dough which must be handled quickly and lightly, and with the addition of as little flour as possible. Roll out three-quarters of an inch thick, cut out with a biscuit-cutter, lay close together in well greased baking-pan, and bake in a quick oven for twenty minutes. Cold water may be used instead of milk. These are simply delicious. Brush them over with sweet milk before placing in the oven if you wish a rich brown. Accompanied by nice new honey and good coffee, it forms a feast.

SALLY LUNN. — To one cup of hot water, add two tablespoonfuls of butter; when the latter is melted, add one teaspoonful of salt, same of sugar, and stir in four cupfuls of flour, one at a time. Beat free from lumps, then add five tablespoonfuls of good yeast. Next add four eggs previously beaten to a froth. Beat with strong, upward strokes for at least one minute. Butter a baking-pan and pour in the batter, which should only half fill it, otherwise the batter will overflow in rising. Set in a warm place to rise for about six hours, then bake for three-quarters of an hour, or an hour, according to oven and depth of batter. If wanted for breakfast, it should be made the last thing at night, and set in a moderately warm place, that it may not rise and fall. Cut in squares for the table with a very sharp knife.

GRAHAM GRIDDLE CAKES. — To three and one-half cups of warm water, add two cups of graham flour, two cups of wheat flour, two tablespoonfuls of white corn meal, one teaspoonful of sugar, one teaspoonful of salt, and one-half cup of good yeast. Let rise in warm place over night. In the morning, dissolve one-half teaspoonful of soda in a little warm water, and add to the batter. Bake in a griddle as hot as may be without burning. Flour varies so much in its capacity for absorbing moisture, that some judgment must be exercised as to consistency of batter. It should be as thin as possible to permit turning the cakes easily. If not, it

may be thinned by the addition of a little water. A teacupful of the batter may be reserved to raise the next batch of batter, when a little more soda will be required. These, if well made, rival buckwheat cakes in sweetness and tenderness, besides being more wholesome for most persons. The recipe, successfully tried, is adopted as a standard, requiring neither milk nor eggs.

HOMINY GRIDDLE CAKES. — To one pint of freshly cooked hominy, while still warm, add one pint of milk and a teaspoonful of salt, mashing the hominy well with a wooden spoon, and adding the milk by degrees. Next add one and a half cups of flour, beating hard for at least a minute. Add next three eggs beaten very lightly, and beat the mixture one minute more with a tablespoonful of sugar added. Bake in small cakes on a griddle. Stir up well before putting each batch on the griddle, and spread them with back of spoon as dropped on the griddle. Both tender and delightful. Serve with maple syrup.

Household Chat.

FAMILY SEWING. — The holiday festivities well over and neglected work brought up, during the month just passed, to the housekeeper's standard of thoroughness, her forethought suggests new fields of action. In all large cities, and in many towns, special sales of household goods occur about this season, and the economical housekeeper has already looked over her household stock in hand, noting the thread-bare want in this line, the "outgrown" need in another, and purchases are made accordingly, with a view to plain sewing completed before house-cleaning and kindred duties shall interfere. In no field is there a better opportunity to exercise economy, than in this. Selections should be made with a view to quality, rather than quantity, as a fairly medium article will more than outwear two of a coarser quality. Table linens of a fine, neat pattern, exhibit best wearing qualities, besides passing for a better quality than where the surface is not so well covered by the pattern. Fine patterns of ferns, leaves, and various flowers are very popular, and as pure white cloths are now so generally used, it is well for the housekeeper to lay in a supply of large napkins for their protection. Carving napkins

and those in which to envelope boiled corn on the cob, rolls, etc., as well as doilies to place under vegetable dishes, sauce boats, etc., are made of plain linen, fringed or hemmed, as fancy may dictate. These may be daintily embroidered in outline designs suggestive of the use to which each is applied. Reference to the catalogue advertised in our columns, will suggest appropriate ones, with directions for procuring them with all necessary material. This will furnish dainty and pleasant employment for the little fingers which are thus learning the easiest way through the more practical work of "by-and-by."

Table mats may be crocheted of white German cord, procurable in the same way. While table napery and cotton sheets, pillow cases, etc., are plainly hemmed by hand, "hemstitched" hems are seen on the finest

bed linen, towels, and toilet belongings. Dainty pillow shams are embroidered in designs of lotus, poppies, hops, or almost anything suggestive of sleep. The words appropriate are wrought in old English or German. A heavy linen lace is sometimes added.

The fashion of shop-made articles of feminine underwear has had its day, and the better class of ladies prefer that this work shall be done at home—fells and hems being done by hand—with no adornment save a simple garniture of fine ruffle, embroidery, or lace. This necessitates a supply of white goods, and the season affords the best opportunity we shall have for manufacturing the necessary garments.

Sham towels for the rack may be daintily embroidered with the initials of the owner. These few words are simply suggestive of the wider field.

LITTLE HOMES.

RUTH HUBBARD.

IN the last article, the kitchen and dining-room were provided for, excepting the curtains for the latter. These are better made of colored madras, and hung from poles. If the room is not well lighted, it is best to dispense entirely with curtains, and have only the necessary shades. A gloomy dining-room is to be avoided. Some who wish to economize in the provision of shades, get stout bleached muslin, and make them, using the "Hartshorn" roller. It is better economy, however, to get the colored shades of a dealer, for white ones soil quickly, and after they are once laundered, they never hang so nicely.

We now come to the third room, which we will not call the drawing-room, neither parlor nor library, for it will have to do duty for all three; therefore we shall call it by the good old-fashioned name of "sitting-room." The greatest expense is in the carpet; but now that carpets are so reasonable, it is not such a very great outlay. A good quality of tapestry is sold as low as sixty-five cents a yard. If a small, medium-colored pattern is

chosen, and care is taken of it, the carpet will last some years. If it is wiped with borax water after being swept, the colors will be brightened, and the carpet freshened like new. Rugs are next in order: not absolutely necessary, but a great addition to the furnishing, and a saving in wear to the carpet.

Smyrna rugs are the best in the low-priced ones, giving the most satisfaction. The same material comes by the yard in plain and figured borders. A square rug for the center of the room is easily made from this Smyrna carpeting. A beautiful one was recently made of deep red for the central portion, with bright gold and black for the border.

Fur rugs are now quite reasonable. One of these will impart an air of elegance to an otherwise plain room.

The furniture is the next consideration. A fashion which is a great advantage to young housekeepers, is that of having a variety of furniture in the same room; the one-patterned set of older days being now *passé*. For this our young people will be truly thankful, and furnish accordingly, only bearing in mind