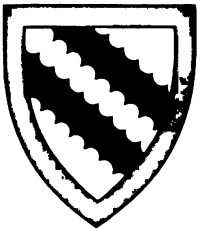

THE MODEL KITCHEN

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THE MODEL KITCHEN

BY

LUCY H. YATES

AUTHOR OF

"THE PROFESSION OF COOKERY," "THE CONVALESCENT'S DIET,"
"MANAGEMENT OF MONEY," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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THE MODEL KITCHEN

I

INTRODUCTION

IT is imperative in these days of high rents in cities, more especially in the Metropolis, that we reduce our household impedimenta as much as possible; and not only must we do this, but we must simplify our ideas concerning our style of living. We begin by a reduction of room space when we take a "flat," as the flat professes to offer us a house and all its appurtenances in the most compact form: it does this, undoubtedly, but it does it in miniature. The flat, when well-built, convenient, and artistically arranged, is a type of dwelling well suited to city life. That all flats are not successful as dwellings, is no fault of the system or plan; but the fault of the jerry-builder, who has sacrificed reason and quality to appearance. All the same, when we have secured a flat that really is

something more than a "brick-and-a-half" in solidity, where the rooms are well supplied with air and light, the bathroom and water-supply in active order, and the back door is a lift which really works, we still have to face the fact that these conveniences are present on a reduced scale, and that the kitchen, especially, is the most cramped and reduced of all. This being unalterable, however, it is no use sighing for what we cannot have; better is it to try and make skill achieve the effect of the space and convenience we desire.

Any one who has seen the inside of a ship's kitchen, or the cook's department of a corridor express train, will have marvelled at the ingenuity which has compressed so much into so few feet of space, and at the order with which everything is arranged. And the cooking that is done here is not only done in a cramped space, under travelling difficulties, but it is done for a number so large as to necessitate the carrying of a quantity of stores as well.

One of the inconveniences felt in a flat is want of light in those divided spaces appropriated to the kitchen; and, to the careless mind, this is made a sufficient reason for neglecting their cleansing. As to this, perhaps the best reply that could be given is that which George Macdonald

makes to a similar excuse, when he says, "There was light enough for a clean-soul'd cook to cook by, and for one who was not clean-soul'd no amount of light would have sufficed."

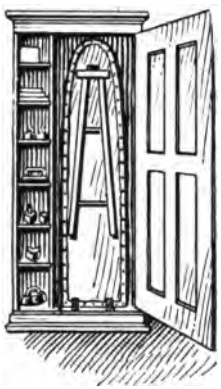
It is neither want of space nor want of light which need deter us from making a complete success of the flat kitchen. The skill with which we use the means we find at our disposal is the test by which we must be judged.

Now skill is largely a matter of adaptation—the adaptation first of ideas, then of means. You cannot arrange and plan and furnish the kitchen of your flat according to the ideas that have governed the plenishings and the arrangements of the kitchen in the roomy old house in which, probably, you grew up. And even if you had space and materials at command, you might not have the means to do so. But when preconceived notions have been done away with, and you have begun to look about you for what a new era has provided for its own requirements, you will see that the change of ideas is altogether to your advantage. Then, again, the smaller space and the fewer tools you have at command mean also a possibility of reducing the amount of service needed. One maid, at the very most two, will have to combine the functions of cook, kitchen-, scullery-, and parlour-maid all in one.

It is even possible, if your flat is very small, that you are called upon to be your own maid aided by outside help given occasionally. Your skill, therefore, is brought into requisition to so simplify labour that no unnecessary steps need be taken and all unimportant work avoided. Here, again, it is the adaptation of ideas to means that makes all the difference between comfort and discomfort. However, I am not desirous of introducing you to the limitations, but to the capacities of the kitchen belonging to your flat—to any flat. You may be quite sure that the mind of the ship's cook is not set upon a consideration of his limitations, but rather upon his capabilities and their demonstration!

I have hinted that a new era has provided tools and materials to suit its own requirements; this is true, and about some of those tools and materials it is a perfect delight to think. Happily for us, there is no room in our diminutive kitchen for the heavy and cumbersome pans which for years have made the cook's task drudgery; there is very little cupboard space and not many shelves. But a dresser is generally to be found as a permanent fixture, and the range fire can be kept small because there is the fixing for a gas cooker. Usually, too, the sanitary sink is neatly enclosed, and part of he space allotted for coals can be

boarded off to hold brushes and the rougher household tools. As the pantry, so-called, is often cramped, and not sufficiently ventilated for the proper keeping of food, I would have you look upon the "Alaska" refrigerator as an indispensable piece of furniture here. If there is room for it to stand on the outer landing, it is better



SHALLOW CUPBOARD WITH IRONING-TABLE, ETC.

BROOM-RACK.

there; if not, it must have its corner somewhere. A small knife-cleaning machine is another necessary investment as a time and labour saver; a vegetable-rack is a contributor to order and a preventer of waste; a mincer is also greatly to be desired as a time and scrap saver. And there are one or two other patent inventions which I regard

as indispensable from the point of view of time and labour-savers—such as vegetable-cutters and crushers, an egg-beater, and a fruit-stoner. These will be referred to again in detail; but what I want to make clear now, is that the kitchen of the flat is the place above all others where we need to make use of every invention, culinary and otherwise, which will lighten labour and economise storage.

Having banished all thoughts of possessing a kitchen equipment of the orthodox pattern in shining copper or tin, as well as having condemned the familiar black iron pan, what are we going to put in their place? I want you to look—but not too covetously—at some charming dishes in green and brown fireproof china; then at the saucepans in grey granite-ware or aluminium; then at the clay *terrines* and the brown stoneware stew-pans of British manufacture. The *terrines*, of French earthenware, glazed inside, are being stocked by all our large ironmongers; in the open markets abroad you can pick them up for a few pence each. These will be your cooking utensils, if you are wise; but you will buy them a few at a time, adding more according as you find out their uses. These pans possess yet this further merit beyond all others—namely, that they are themselves suggestive of ideas; you can

hardly fail to cook and make things which both look and taste well when you use them. Moreover, when you are cooking in a dish of this kind, you are spared the trouble of transferring its contents to another before bringing to table, as the intention is for them to be carried in straight from the stove, thus ensuring that the food cooked in them shall be "piping hot." In following chapters I have given detailed directions for using the principal utensils of this order, wherefore it is unnecessary to say more about them here, except a word in regard to their cost. This is but very little more in proportion than that of the ordinary makes of lined iron or tin saucepans; it is only when we come to the fanciful and ornamental makes of game-pie and soufflé cases that we reach more expense, but these can be added or left out as means and circumstances allow.

Here and now I would emphatically endorse the use of all patent inventions in the shape of cleaning-helps; of such, at any rate, as prove themselves worthy of the merits claimed for them. I do not mean that you should be beguiled by every advertisement, but rather take apostolic advice, and "prove all things, holding fast that which is true." To give them their due, all these are brought out with the intention of

lightening labour, and most of them do a great deal towards it. Just to mention but one or two amongst the humblest of such household helps as examples—we have in "Vim" a wonderful assistant for the cleaning of saucepans and all enamelled ware; it will remove the grease and stains from earthenware better than anything else I know, and polish covers, or take the stains

TOWEL-RAIL.

from steel knives with so little effort, needing but to be sprinkled on a damp cloth and rubbed on. The washing of dusters and cloths has become quite an easy matter since Fels-Naptha soap was brought out; and so it is with a score of other things. It is a good rule to condemn none untried. The value of Selvytt cloths for polishing purposes we all know, but the same cloths, after washing, make the most admirable dusters. Old newspapers are better than any cloth or leather for the cleaning of window-panes;

and common salt sprinkled over carpets makes their sweeping easier and refreshes the colours. In a flat, more than anywhere else, one has to keep clean as much by prevention as by the actual process of cleaning. Much sweeping merely succeeds in displacing dirt from one part to deposit it in another; I would advocate as little sweeping with long-handled brooms as may be, and more use of a dampened duster and of cloths for wiping over carpets and floors. For carpets and rugs a woollen cloth, wrung out of hot water into which a little ammonia has been put, removes the dust much more effectually than any sweeping or brushing. To pick up loose bits and remove footmarks or dirt in places, is better than to let dust lie until a regular time for cleaning comes round; the furniture is spared, and so are the mouldings and edges of doors, for it is round these that dust drifts and collects. When sweeping has to be done, let all the furniture be carefully covered; and, before uncovering it, give attention first to the cornices and mouldings, wiping everywhere with the damp cloth before other dusting begins.

Unless some special rule prevails in the flat as to the removal of waste refuse and ashes, a closed sanitary dust-bin, which can be removed bodily and replaced at stated times, is a necessity.

In some blocks of buildings the regulations are sufficiently stringent to prevent any annoyance, in others there is just as great laxity, and therefore the greater need for taking proper care and precautions.

Just a word here, before we plunge into minuter details, about the need for careful organisation as to system and methods of work that exists in a flat, even more particularly than in a house—that is, if work is to go smoothly and the limitations of space are not to cause friction. There must be a comprehension on the part of the mistress of what it is possible and what it is not possible for a single pair of hands to achieve; but also a firm insistence upon a little extra fastidious care being given, not only as to the use of things, but also as to the prevention of smells. Few servants care much about the contrivances and inventions which delight a mind accustomed to order and refinement; they prefer the rougher and readier methods, and think that, if they are willing to clean dirt away, they have a right to make it first. Only a mistress who herself knows the value of time and labour can be patient enough to direct and insist on right methods being followed. The association with her help becomes, in a flat, rather more close than in a house; on this

THE DRESSER CABINET ("THE MCDOUGALL IDEA").

account it calls for special watchfulness—a watchfulness that, while being kindly, lets nothing slip, and, above all, that allows no familiarity, since that is the first step towards incurring contempt.

The Kitchen Dresser Cabinet (see p. 11).

Its primary object is that of saving space, and it does this by utilising not only every inch of possible cupboard space, but by having racks on the doors for holding jars for rice and other dry goods. Small drawers provide for spices, cutters, string, corks, etc., and larger ones hold kitchen napery, towels, and dusters. A sliding top gives extra table-room when required.

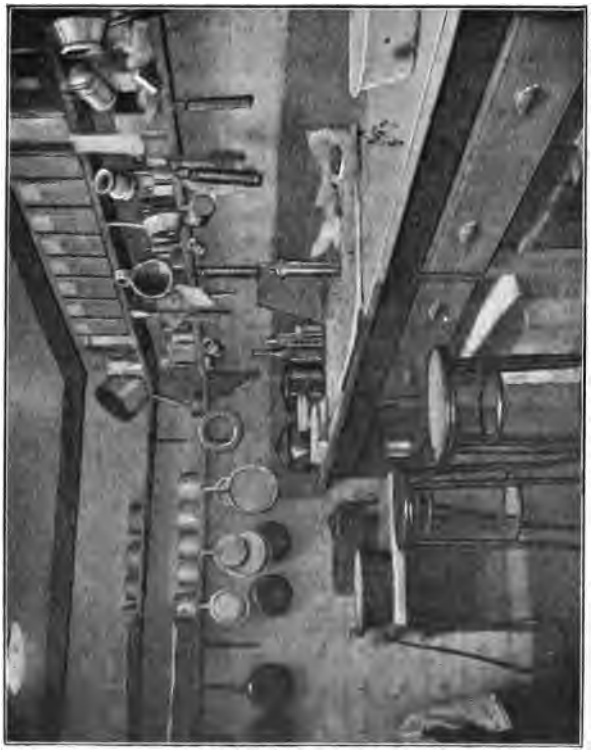
This cabinet was, I believe, the idea of a clever young housewife, brought to the notice of the firm of McDougall in the States, who called in the help of an artist, a cabinet-maker, and a man of science, and the result of their combined skill is known as "The McDougall Idea." But it is the tidy woman's invention all the same.

II

A MODEL EQUIPMENT FOR THE KITCHEN OF A FLAT

With Approximate Prices for Middle Sizes

	£	s.	d.
"ALASKA" refrigerator, intended specially for flats	6	6	0
Quick bread-mixer	0	10	6
Nickel chafing-dish	0	12	6
Vegetable-rack	0	11	6
Spong's chopper, five discs	0	5	6
„ "Reconstructed" knife-cleaner, patt. 1902	0	12	6
Fork-cleaner	0	0	6
Self-basting pan	0	6	6
Asparagus-boiler	0	4	6
Ragout-dish	0	5	6
French fireproof china—			
Two eared dishes, oval and round	0	2	6
Omelet-pan	0	1	4
Covered pie-dish	0	5	0
Milk-boiler	0	2	6
Soufflé-dish	0	1	9
Two cocottes, six ramaquin cases	0	3	6
French fireproof clay—			
Casserole, 4 pints	0	2	0
Marmite, 6 pints	0	2	0
Six petites marmites, at 7*d.* each	0	3	6
Game pie-dish	0	7	6



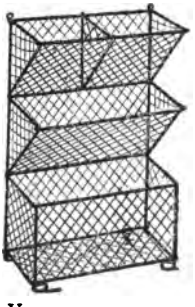
A Corner of the Kitchen.

	£	s.	d.
Grey granite enamel ware—			
Two lip saucepans	0	4	6
Two boiling, with lids	0	5	0
Three jugs	0	5	0
Diable rousset	0	2	6
Frying-pan with shield	0	3	6
Coffee-mill	0	4	6
Cafetière, with lamp, for table use, in nickel	0	10	6
"Mikado" tea-infuser	0	1	0
"Passoire" for purées	0	2	0
Cabbage-strainer	0	4	6
"Queen's" pudding moulds	0	2	6
Gourmet-boiler	0	2	6
,, "rapid" steamer	0	1	0
,, egg-poacher	0	1	0
Minor tools—			
Fruit and vegetable slicer	0	1	6
Pastry cutters	0	1	0
3-fold grater	0	0	6
Dover egg-beater	0	0	6
Pie-cup	0	0	6
Glass lemon-squeezer	0	1	0
Gravy-strainers	0	1	6
French cook's knives	0	2	4
"Clauss" bread knife	0	0	10
Palette knife	0	0	10
Vegetable knife	0	1	0
Can-opener	0	0	6
Apple-corer	0	1	0
Wire forks	0	1	6
Basting-spoons	0	1	0
Oyster knife	0	0	6
Wooden spoons, various	0	2	0
Skewers	0	1	6
Meat-saw	0	2	0

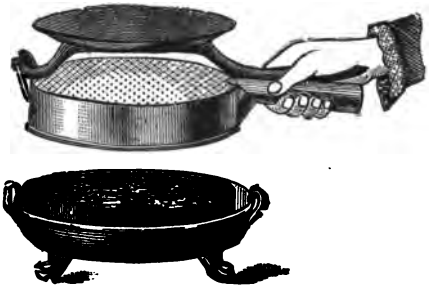
Minor Tools—*continued.*	£	s.	d.
Two wire tamis	0	2	6
"Isobel" rolling-pin and board	0	4	6
Domestic refuse-holder	0	2	0
Sink tidy	0	0	6
Fruit-stoner	0	1	0
Lip basins, set of three	0	2	0
Selvytt cloths, per set	0	4	6
Set of rush mats for table protection	0	1	0
Housemaid's gloves, per pair	0	1	0
Chamois leathers, three for	0	2	0
Dish-mop and jug-mop, etc.	0	0	9
Dresden dusters, per doz.	0	3	3
Scouring-cloths, per doz.	0	2	6

Total cost of above equipment, £16 6*s.* 1*d.*

The above list is made out without reference to articles which would be classed amongst household furniture, nor does it take account of kettles, baking-pans, etc., provided with the fittings of a gas stove, but is intended to serve as a guide to the purchase of modern kitchen utensils and tools.



VEGETABLE-RACK.



CABBAGE-STRAINER.

III

THE COMPACT STORE CLOSET

THE following list is intended to be suggestive of articles which it is reasonable to have in store, for help in cases of emergency, as additions to the table, and for the right equipment of a kitchen. We have to bear in mind that in a flat it is not so possible to be running out for everything that is wanted, just when it is wanted; and, even in a house, that is a wasteful way of proceeding. Our object in the model kitchen is to show how, by thought and foresight, we may save time and unnecessary steps. The store closet, properly filled, can do much in this way; and, although our store space may be limited, it may be sufficient for all our needs if the selection is carefully made. Once a store has been set up, its keeping-up is a simple and inexpensive matter. From this list a smaller selection can easily be made.

Taking food materials first—some of which it will be seen are the things we ordinarily denominate

"groceries"—while others are selected with a view to the quick preparation of extra dishes for the table :—

Farinaceous : Groult's rice-flour, potato fécule, chestnut-flour, tapioca. Groult's Crême d'Orge. Brown & Polson's Cornflour. Arrowroot. Bird's custard powder. Chocolate powder. D.C.L. yeast. Baking powder. Egg powder. Pearl barley, and sago. Vermicelli. Maccaroni (Cosenza's Special). Spaghetti. Pastines.

Lazenby's curry sauce. Indian curry paste. Indian mango chutney.

Driessen's Foundation sauces (*Italian*, *Espagnole*, *Allemande*).

Maggi's Consommé (set of tubes). 1 box, assorted, Cross Star soups. Gravy soup. Tomato purée, peeled tomatoes in tin.

Flavouring Essences : Maraschino, ratafia, lemon, vanilla. Vanilla in pod. Stick cinnamon, ground ditto ; nutmegs ; cloves ; ginger (ground) ; mace ; lemon-peel ; extract of cochineal. Vegetable colourings, sap green and red ; ground almonds ; pistachio kernels ; celery salt ; essence of rennet ; mixed herbs, dried parsley, mint, thyme, bay-leaves.

Condensed milk. Golden syrup. Huile de Provence (salad oil).

Chilli or Tarragon vinegar ; pure malt ditto. Capers in bottle.

Dried Fruits, and Fruit in Syrup for Dessert : Raisins, sultanas, currants ; plums for stewing, French prunes ; figs, dried apricots, Normandy pippins.

Chow-chow (mixed fruits). French apricots, peaches, plums.

Preserved Vegetables: Macédoine in bottles; Petits Pois; haricots verts; asparagus. American green corn; julienne; dried mushrooms.

Parmesan cheese in bottle. French mustard in jar. Gravy salt. Cerebos salt, kitchen salt. Ground and whole pepper.

French olives in bottle; boned anchovies; sardines in oil.

Pastes and Potted Meats: Most useful are—salmon and shrimp; Marshall's Luxette; ham; curried chicken; rabbit.

Sauces: Anchovy, mushroom ketchup, walnut, tomato, Indian relish.

Icing and castor sugars, Marshall's leaf gelatine. Isinglass.

Bovril; beef extract; Brand's essence.

Household Stores—

Household ammonia, for toilet or scrubbing.

Sanitas or Jeye's Fluid. Sanitas powder.

Emery cloths and powder, for knife and steel polishing.

Globe or Buttercup metal polish for brass.

Goddard's plate powder, for silver and electro.

Gard's polishing-cloths.

Robin starch.

Carbolic soap. Vim. Monkey brand. Fels-Naptha. Sunlight.

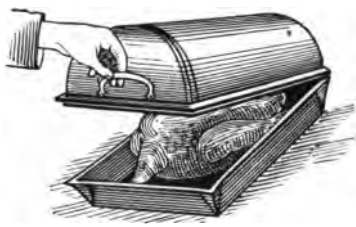
"Bimbo" (dry window cleaner) for mirrors, flower-glasses, etc.

Furniture cream. Turpentine. Linseed oil.

Carbonate of soda, washing soda, and borax.

Pitch-pine fire-lighters.
Fish-glue or cement.
Wire-wove wood mat, for kneeling, or for standing on at sink.
A set of dish and dessert papers, oval, lace, soufflé, cases, frills; pie collars, cutlet frills, ham frills, cake doylies.
Kitchen and cooking paper in sheets; toilet paper in rolls.

ASPARAGUS-BOILER.



SELF-BASTING ROASTER AND BAKING-PAN.

IV

THE GAS COOKING-STOVE

The American Kitchener and Range

WITHIN the last few years the gas cooking-stove—to say nothing of gas heating and lighting apparatus for private and public use—has developed enormously. We began with the portable ring that was affixed by a tube piping, and was portable within certain limits only,—its capabilities were also strictly confined within limits; we have now the completely fitted gas range, the hot-plate and grill,—the latter, when on a large scale, as for hotels, is little short of a marvel in its self-acting mechanism: and, in between these extremes, a number of minor but not less important improvements which make gas an almost perfect medium for the small household's requirements, by night and day. Gas has become a friend, not merely a servant. Where formerly it was used in one or two ways only, to boil or roast, we now find that,

according to the way in which it is fixed or arranged, we may surround as well as subdue with heat; that we may cook a thing on all sides at once and in half the time that it takes to do one side and then another. In the old grill, for instance, there was a hardening and carbonizing of the outside of meat in order to cook, yet retain, the juices within —a sort of frying-pan action: now, by a more perfect system of combustion of air and gas, by which the article to be cooked is not merely treated with heat from gas, but by superheated air, and all over alike at the same time, there is an instantaneous action which coagulates the albumen near the surface, preventing the escape of juices from the interior, while these, becoming heated, expand the fibres, and in a much shorter time attain that state of chemical action which we understand by anything being "cooked," namely, prepared for digestion. This improved system of combustion abolishes also those injurious sulphur compounds which made the use of a gas cooker a dread in some households in earlier days.

What has given such a spurt to invention and improvement is, of course, the growth in popularity of electricity. As a lighting medium, we prefer it for our flat; but, for some years to come, gas is sure to remain the mainstay on which we depend for cooking purposes. Nevertheless, gas only

retains its popularity by keeping pace with modern ideas — ideas of a complex nature sometimes. The bugbear of a quarterly account of elastic and unknowable dimension, for instance, has kept many a householder from using gas who would have been glad of its easy convenience. This objection has been met by the payment of a penny, sixpence, or a shilling in the slot, and no gas bill. The slight but annoying mischance of happening to want the right coin at the moment gave rise to the further invention of a system whereby any coin which came handiest might be used, and change returned if it was required! At present we are left wondering if the "willingness to oblige" which gas exhibits in such perfection can be made to go any further.

The first cooking-stoves were objectionable because they gave off fumes and smoke which discoloured the walls and poisoned the air; and the food cooked in them, if not exactly contaminated by the same, acquired a flavour that, to say the least, was undesirable. Moreover, the rough iron of which the frame was made was found impossible to keep really clean. So began the proper fixing of flues, then of tiled or plated shields on the walls; then it was found possible to enamel the interior of ovens; finally, the process proceeding from within out, it was found

unnecessary to build the cooking-stove of iron at all, and polished steel, brass fittings, tiles, and enamel transformed the ugly Cinderella of the kitchen to a thing of ornament as well as of use. Now, the gas stove in the flat may be washed daily, polished, and kept as sweet and dainty as the finest bit of fireproof ware that adorns the flat dresser.

Side by side with the gas cooking-stove we can have fixed the gas boiler for the heating of water, thus doing away with the need for the range fire, since the boiler will supply the bath as well as the kitchen's requirements, or another boiler can be fixed in the bathroom itself, and lit when required. The convenience of these boilers is far too little known, and as they can be hired with the same facility as any other make of stove, and paid for in the same manner, it seems a great pity that any modern flat should be considered furnished without one. Personally, I look upon the gas boiler, when fixed in the bathroom, as a more reliable friend than the Geyser, and as far more satisfactory than the tank system. I am not unmindful of the fact that much using of gas may prove far from economical, even when paid for by instalments; but the fact is that economy is gained by the very same facility which leads to waste, namely, the ease with which

it can be turned on and off. If used only when really wanted, and promptly extinguished, if not allowed to smoke or the flame to rush out with force, gas is not costly. It should be borne in mind, however, that a small jet left burning, may consume as much as a full light, and therefore the rule should be to use gas just when and as it is wanted, and no more.

The cleanliness of cooking by gas is undoubtedly a strong recommendation in its favour from the point of view of the flat-dweller. Ashes and cinders, and inevitable smoke from a fire are a great drawback.

We seem to reach a compromise between the two when we turn to look at the merits of the American kitchener. Undoubtedly this last has claims peculiarly its own, and they are worth an examination. Ashes and cinders and smoke are reduced to the minimum quantity; comfort and warmth in the kitchen are increased; possible fumes of escaping and unconsumed gas there are none; cleanliness and appearance are almost a match. And economy? Well, here again I am inclined to think it is a tie; there is not much to be said either way.

The American kitchener is first cousin to, and imitator of, the French *cuisinière*, and you do not find the *bourgeoise* at all keen to forsake her faithful

ally in favour of modern gas inventions of any kind. You may find her accepting the services of a gas ring for boiling purposes ; but for her roast or stew or braise—no ! She does not trust her *terrine* to anything so fierce as a gas flame ; her *marmite* she would far rather see set upon the charcoal braisier than upon a gas ring : and she is right. There is some subtle sympathy, springing from a sense of fitness, which suits the medium and the purpose so exactly to one another. And my own sympathies go out towards the *cuisinière*, I must confess. Its simple but handsome build and its brilliant exterior, its convenience, its economy, and cleanliness are strongly attractive. But, as I said, the American kitchener is only first cousin and imitator, and we in this country know the kitchener far better than we know the stove it imitates, therefore it is the merits of the latter that we must set, in a critical and careful spirit against those of the gas stove, when considering the requirements of our flat.

As a baking stove, for pastry and cakes, and as a stove calculated to suit particularly well the fireproof clay and china we have chosen for our utensils, the kitchener certainly has an advantage over gas. It is equally economical, for the amount of coal it consumes is small, therefore the amount of waste refuse it makes is small also.

It cannot, however, be got into condition so readily as gas, since heat from a coal fire is, of course, much harder to raise ; therefore, if speed is the chief consideration—speed and readiness,—choose gas and a gas stove. But if speed is of less importance, if wear and tear, flavour and perfection are more prized, and if time and thought can be given to secure the same, choose the kitchener.

The reason why the kitchener succeeds better as a baking stove is because the flame passes over the top before it goes underneath the oven ; it does not mount from below as in the gas oven, nor does it induce a steam, as the enamel-sheathed stove is apt to do. On the other hand, it does not roast nearly so well, for the very reasons mentioned. Its table-like top is a convenience for boiling purposes, although this is a minor consideration. The flat that would be perfectly equipped ought, it seems, to have both gas stove and kitchener. It can, if you abolish the range ; and there is no reason why, even if the range exists, a tenant should not ask to have it taken down and the kitchener which he buys himself fitted in, in such a manner as to be removable when a change is made.

I would advocate the proper fitting-in of both kitchener and gas stove, the best that can be

afforded of their kind, where the flat has been taken on a lease, and where much of its work will devolve upon the mistress herself. The best tools are the cheapest in the end, and in skilled hands the best are the only right tools to use; but one does not like to see fine tools blunted and carelessly used by the unthinking. So the decision as to which make of cooking stove you will adopt resolves itself into the question of whether you or your maids are to be its users. And here, having shown you the possibilities of the "more excellent way," I must leave you either to take it or to fall back upon the old conventions and suffer their drawbacks, if such is your election.

V

OIL STOVES AND BACHELOR EQUIPMENTS

IN considering the modern twentieth-century flat on the larger scale, belonging to the family, we must not leave out of sight the fact that it exists also in a miniature or bijou form, as the *ménage* of the bachelor—man or maid. To such the fittings and conveniences of their small dwelling are of quite as much importance as to the householder on the larger scale; perhaps they are of even more importance, for in this case there is not any question as to which pair of hands the work shall be entrusted—therefore the best and most suitable tools must be found and used. The bachelor-flat is, however, so well established an institution in modern life that its needs and requirements are every whit as well catered for as any other type, and it has its especial contrivances, its especial provisions. To these we may well devote some of our space.

Keeping still to the subject of stoves for cooking purposes, there is a new make of portable gas cooking-stove, which is altogether admirable in its way in the conveniences it offers, its light weight, its mobility, and small cost. It has been

PORTABLE GAS STOVE.

brought out by Messrs. George Scott & Co., who supply the stoves to all the larger gas companies, from whom they can be hired or purchased like any other make. The stoves are a compact square or, rather, oblong box of polished sheet iron, lined with asbestos. They are heated by

burners in a side chamber, therefore there are no jets in the oven. The hot-plate is the whole top of the stove itself, and the only fixing required is a length of flexible tubing, which can be attached to the ordinary burner or bracket. Possessing all the appearance and advantages of the Rippingill oil stove, this is both cleaner and cheaper than the latter, since its certified cost in gas, at 3*s.* per 1000 feet, is only ¾*d.* per hour. Seeing how much can be accommodated in its oven with the movable shelf, on its flat surface top, and with so little expenditure of heat, I am charmed with this invention.

Other makes of gas cooking-stoves there are in plenty, to be hired or purchased, made in diminutive sizes, but quite effective in the working, and, where gas is laid on, the bachelor tenant is wise who insists on having some such stove fixed in place. But small flats are sometimes found minus all provision of gas, although wired for electric lighting. Sometimes, in the lower-rented ones, and especially in self-contained rooms, there is neither electricity or gas, therefore the dependence is on oil for lighting, and a fire, or possibly an oil stove, for cooking. But, happily, this does not leave the single-handed householder without resources; oil stoves have advanced and become up-to-date, in a line with the gas stove

and the kitchener. Rippingill's complete double-tank stove is a perfect range in itself; its capacities are varied enough to suit the most exacting. It will bake, and stew, and roast, and boil, all at the same time; but, so far as I am able to learn, it does *not* let itself out on hire. It must, therefore,

THE BACHELOR'S STEW-PAN.

be bought outright, and looked upon as an investment by its owner. But if oil is your medium, by necessity or by choice, a better investment than a Rippingill you could not make. Of other boiling and heating stoves there are varieties numerous enough to suit all purses, and there is the further development of the portable oven to be noted, which can be affixed to any boiling-stove to enlarge its capacity and vary the means of cooking.

But there is another invention of which I want to make mention, and that is the Hutchings steamer, a perfect conjuror's cabinet in itself. It

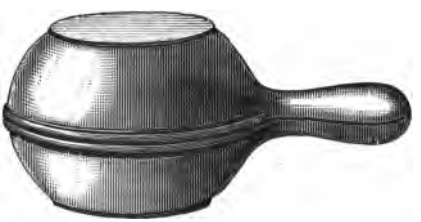
is a tier of compartments, one fitting on above another, the bottom one being the steamer ; and it is guaranteed to cook as perfectly on the top floor as in its basement. Moreover, one or two, or all the compartments, can be used without interfering with the rest, according to the needs of time and place. Each compartment is so far independent of the other that a whole dinner may be cooked at once without any mingling of flavours. Each department, too, has its check-valve, by closing which any portion of the dinner can be prevented from being overcooked, yet still be kept hot. And, finally, it is claimed for this capital invention that, when the dinner is cooked and eaten, there is water left ready in the boiler for its washing-up. A sovereign covers the cost of the fully-completed steamer, and extra cookers or strainers can be had if required. These steamers are stocked by all large furnishing ironmongers.

The Gourmet, or double boiler, spoken of in another place, is a capital investment for the bachelor ; and so, too, is the self-basting roaster and baking-pan, which can be used for meat, bread, or cakes at will. This is an inexpensive thing, but most useful, especially where anything put into it might have to be left untended for a considerable time.

The Chafing-dish is a true bachelor's invention,

but of that no more need be said here; a less costly and equally capable contrivance is "The Economic," a portable cooking-dish which closes down to a compact sort of valise, but which, when opened out and supplied with methylated spirit for its fuel, will cook chops, steak, fish, and eggs, and in ten minutes' time boil the kettle for tea.

Just here I may make special mention of the *diable rousset*, which, if not exactly a bachelor's speciality, is yet particularly well suited to his and her requirements. It is a quaint utensil, but a



THE DIABLE ROUSSET.

revival of a very homely old country implement. No doubt it was first devised for use amongst the ashes of an open hearth, for roasting and baking potatoes, chestnuts, and things of like character for the supper, when men and maids sat round the open fire in the long winter evenings. The diable rousset — nobody has given it an English name, so far as I can learn—is made of

rough clay, in two equal parts, which fit compactly one over the other. Because of its rough, porous nature it should never be washed in water, therefore its contents should always be of a dry order. You may use this over an open fire, or over a small gas or oil flame, with equal convenience. It is chiefly used for roasting potatoes in their skins, and for chestnuts, sometimes also for coffee. There is no need to turn its contents over, but turn the utensil itself as many times as you like. Usually ten minutes' roasting suffices for chestnuts, and about twice as long for potatoes, and the cooking is perfect. Many a cosy and cheap bachelor supper of roasted potatoes, with butter and salt, has the dear little diable rousset given me. In roasting coffee-berries the pan must be shaken freely from time to time; you must judge by the colour what time to allow for their browning.

The "Three-Minute Bread Maker," which, though an American patent, is now stocked by ironmongers everywhere, is another most helpful thing to have in possession, whether you are "one by yourself" or a family party. There is no one but enjoys the delicious flavour of home-made bread, when made from sweet, country flour, and to make it, as one may, with such ease, is mere play. The simple, cleanly construction

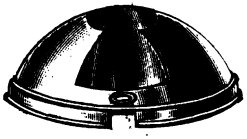
of this new patent is a great recommendation, but the fact that one may make so little as four pounds of flour at a time, or even less, get a nourishing loaf, and save about 60 per cent. of the price of ordinary bread, is still more in its favour. As I have said, it is mere play, the making of bread in this way; moreover, you may make dough or powder cakes in the same mixer, or puddings, or mincemeat, and be every whit as satisfied with it.

Another advantage which bread-making at home gives is the ability to change and vary the flours at will. Pure home-milled country flour, of a slightly yellowish tinge, sweet and fine, gives us the loaf of a creamy colour inside, crisp and brown outside, nutty in flavour. Whole meal, Indian meal, Graham flour and rye-meal, all help to make changes, and so, too, we may add rice or flaked oats to ordinary flour. Then think of the possibility of dough-cakes for tea, or rolls for breakfast, and the like! I tell you, it is a delightsome plaything, this magic breadmaker!

You may use your own recipe or follow the directions given with the machine, but the secret of success lies in putting in all the liquids first, then the flour. Turn the crank for three minutes, then leave the pan in a warm place for the dough to rise—about an hour,—and, when risen, loosen

it with a knife from the edges of the pail; turn the crank again, to form the dough into a ball; loosen the binding lever of the cross-piece, take this off, and lift the dough out of the pail, push it off the kneading rod, cut into pieces, and bake in tins. This is the only point in the whole process where it becomes necessary to touch the dough with the hands at all. I class this capital invention as one of the truest labour and time savers which the new century has given to us.

The frying-pan shield is a labour-saver of another kind, in that it prevents grease-spots, prevents waste, and, also, with care, prevents smells of frying from becoming disagreeable. The circular cover (which is more in the nature of a shield than a cover) has a wide opening in the front which admits of knife or fork being used to turn over the contents of the pan; and it is also open at the top, as to cover anything which was frying would, of course, be to alter the nature of the cooking. But I have been charmed with this new protective shield in the use thereof, for it saves one from the danger of explosive fats, and keeps the stove so clean. One's thought, after seeing and trying all these things, is invariably the



FRYING-PAN SHIELD.

same—"Why did no one think of this before?"—yes, years before, and so save burnt hands and faces, grumblings because of smells that seemed unavoidable, and a host of other unpleasantnesses.

Lastly, a word about the Gourmet boilers: the principle is that of one pan within another, to ensure regular heat, and prevent actual boiling or waste of contents; but the true Gourmet saucepan has an interlining of glazed stoneware, with feet at the bottom to prevent its immediate contact with the outer pan of steel or iron. There is thus water underneath and all round, and this obviates any need for constant stirring or attention, even for the most delicate custard. But the prime use of the Gourmet I take to be the making of invalid's beef-tea, although you may use it for a thousand other purposes. You may safely leave a Gourmet boiler on the stove all day without attention, save to see that there is water in the outer pan. It is capital, too, for porridge-making, and is always chosen by demonstrators of breakfast foods, Quaker oats, etc., as by no other mode of cooking is the flavour so well preserved.

The utensils here described, and many others not included in this description, belong to the scientific development of cookery, wherein lies their fascination. Heat in some form is the

agent employed in all cooking, but the actual chemical changes brought about by the use of heat vary according to the degree attained, and the nature of the vessels in which cooking takes place. Wherever we find laws and principles at work we reach an exact science, and it is as an exact science, rather than as a necessary daily task, that we treat of cookery in even the smallest model kitchen.

VI

THE CHAFING-DISH

ONCE you are acquainted with a chafing-dish you can hardly think a flat well-equipped or suitably furnished if it does not count one as part of its fittings. Not that I regard the chafing-dish as a kitchen utensil, unless the kitchen is so entirely its mistress's own domain that she keeps and uses everything in it herself. Even then the chafing-dish is more suitably housed in the dining-room. Wherever located, however, it deserves the most respectful treatment and attention, because it can achieve so much that we class as the perfection of cookery.

I like to see it standing at the corner of the breakfast-table on a winter's morning, the beams from the fire caught in its bright nickel or copper cover, and thrown back in playful reflection. When the cover is lifted, some fragrant savour tells of eggs cooking in butter, of fillets of fish, or grilling sausages; and, whatever it be that is

found therein, you fancy it tastes better, perhaps because it looks better, than if the same had been cooked in anything else or in any other mode. But its great advantage lies in the time, and trouble, and steps it saves you, by having it close to your hand. Time and steps count for so much the first thing in the morning! A little timely assistance like this, a little extra comfort, and that tempting trifle it has helped to make—these, perhaps, turn the scale, and decide the humour of the day. If it did nothing more for you than this, you must surely agree that a chafing-dish is worth having.

At first, perchance, it puzzles its happy possessor; it seems as though its processes must be slow, its range rather limited. But wait and prove it. It has two pans—the lower one, for holding water,—and, in following out directions, you are probably keeping this over the flame unnecessarily. This lower pan is only intended to be used in its proper capacity—that is, for retarding the cooking of anything that must be done gently, and for keeping hot something already cooked. In making custards and other sauces we require slack heat; so, too, for simmering fish or oysters, or meat already cooked that is being reheated. But fillets, and cutlets, and sausages want brisker heat, therefore we discard the lower pan, and set

the one with the handle straight over the flame; it is easy to diminish this flame by means of its own check, if there seems a likelihood of burning or cooking too fast. The chafing-dish should stand on an iron tray, or something equivalent, which need not be more than just large enough,

THE CHAFING-DISH.

but this precaution is necessary lest a little spirit overflow and catch alight.

You keep the outside polished to the last degree, no doubt, but is the inside preserved with the same immaculate care? The one thing to avoid is scratching and roughening the lining with a knife, supposing it has burnt portions left sticking to it after washing. If your dish is a

copper one, you may remind yourself that to "scratch a Russian and find a Tartar" is not more likely than to expose the copper by defacing the metal that forms the lining, and the result of so doing is equally dangerous! If friction must be had recourse to, remember the advice already given about the use of "Vim," or Sapolio, or Monkey soap: all these work the effect you want without causing any defect. Once a chafing-dish is spoilt by careless cleaning it is very difficult to get it set right again. Whenever the pan is done with for the time being, let it be filled at once with cold water, and so prevent any hardening of substances on the surface.

It is well to bear in mind, also, that on metals of this kind acids have a rapidly deteriorating effect, and so avoid using them wherever possible. Tomatoes are but a mild acid, yet they stain quickly, and the pan should be cleansed as soon as practicable after they have been cooked in it. Any vinegar or lemon-juice wanted to give piquancy to a dish should be added just before serving. With such care there is no further harm to fear.

If you have learnt to care for and use shredded wheat or triscuit as foundation "cases," you will have a whole host of dainty dishes for which to use your chafer. One is sometimes tempted to wonder whether such a thing as shredded wheat could

ever have come into such favour as it has if it had not been for the chafing-dish ; and certain I am that more than half the fame that the Heinz preparations have acquired is due to the one utensil which seems to have been evolved on purpose for them—or they for it. Take American canned corn or baked beans ; serve these with the sauce that is advised with them,

CREAMED EGGS AND SHREDDED WHEAT.

and fill your thin, well-hollowed, and crispened wheat-cases with the same corn, or beans, or peas—whichever you have,—and you have a dish that is pretty and tempting enough to set before a king, possessing all the essentials of a good and satisfying meal. The great mistake that so many make is in not shaping these wheat-cases quite thin enough ; there need be no waste of substance by so doing, as the shreds cast off make excellent

raspings for other things. The cases want nicely toasting in a gas oven before they are filled.

For quick heating of a little soup, for a purée, a gravy, and for sauces, at all times and seasons, there is nothing half so handy to use for the purpose as the chafing-dish. There may be sweet as well as savoury sauces, of course. Here, for instance, is a delicious sauce for serving with tinned fruits—peaches, pears, apricots, plums, etc.

SWEET SAUCE FOR TINNED FRUITS.

Let half a pint of milk heat to boiling-point, then stir in a tea-spoonful of corn or rice-flour, previously wetted with cold milk; when this boils, take the pan off the fire, and let it cool for a minute. Whisk separately the whites and yolks of two fresh eggs, keep the whites aside, and stir into the yolks three spoonfuls of castor sugar and a few drops of liqueur. Next stir this into the thickened milk, continuing the stirring while you pour the custard off into a basin; then,

finally, with a light, lifting motion add the whisked whites, so as to keep the whole as much like froth as possible. Set this cream on ice if you can; if not, let it stand in cold water for an hour. When cold, fill the centres of the fruit, serving each on a biscuit, and garnish with chopped cherries.

The chafing-dish is, again, pre-eminently suited to the making of curries, because, when once made in the one pan, the placing of this over water in the other ensures just that slow simmering which gives the mellow flavour every curry should acquire—which you can never give to it by any other than slow cooking. Fish curries, vegetable curries, eggs in curry-sauce—all these ring the changes pleasantly with those of meat and poultry. Apropos of curries, the mere addition of a curry-powder or paste, however choice, to a gravy or sauce does not transform that into the genuine thing. You must build up from the beginning; and, perhaps, just here and now, is as good an opportunity as any to give you a reliable recipe for the making of a foundation curry-sauce, into which you can put meat or poultry, fish or eggs, as you choose.

Take a large cooking-apple; pare, core, and mince it finely; mince three small shallots, and slice a tomato: then simmer these together in an

ounce of butter. When soft, crush them down, rub in a tea-spoonful of fécule or potato-flour, and add a large cupful of good bone-stock; stir over the flame until it boils, then rub the whole through a fine sieve or tamis. Add now a salt-spoonful of salt, a pinch of mixed peppers, two tea-spoonfuls of finest curry powder or paste, one of chutney, and two of dried cocoanut, and a few drops of vinegar, or glass of white wine. Mix all thoroughly well, and let the flame under the dish be lowered, or fill the bottom pan with water, and set the chafer over it. Let the sauce simmer for at least half an hour by itself, then place in it whatever is being served as a curry: if meat, let this be thinly and neatly sliced; poultry, cut into the smallest joints; fish, in cutlets, rolls, or flakes; and eggs halved or sliced. Let the simmering go on gently for another half-hour at least, more if you can. Serve a curry straight from the chafing-dish, with dry, cooked rice in a separate dish beside you.

Very passable curries are to be bought ready prepared, and these can be heated in the chafing-dish with a minimum amount of trouble, serving with rice as usual. Indeed, for all kinds of things which want setting forth at short notice, I regard the chafer as an invaluable assistant.

VII

THE CASSEROLE AND MARMITE

JUST a word in the beginning, which applies to all utensils made of glazed clay: it is that such material, when new, must be "seasoned" before being brought into regular use. The reason for this process is to render the pan less brittle, and to make it, as it were, "grip" the substances put in contact with it. This "seasoning" consists in soaking the whole pan overnight in cold water, immersing it completely inside and out; then, after drying, to heat it gradually with some fat inside, more than once if possible. Much of your future success depends on having the ware properly seasoned at first, as the difference between using a new pan and one that has been in use for some time proves; more, however, depends on keeping every article absolutely clean, and, to ensure their being so, they should be washed out immediately after using, with boiling water and soda. Any stains or burnt

remains, left inside or out, will be liable to impart their flavour to whatever is cooked in the vessel next time; they can all be rubbed off with the friendly help of "Vim."

The casserole is pre-eminently the pan for use in a slow oven, or for setting amongst the cinders on the hearth: this last is the position you generally find it occupying in poor country cottages abroad. The marmite is chosen when a larger number of vegetables and more liquid have to be accommodated; the marmite is the producer

CASSEROLE. MARMITE.

of *potages* innumerable, especially of those compounded solely of vegetables. It does its work so quietly, so thoroughly, asking only for abundance of time, and to occupy a corner of the stove where the heat will not be great. The results which both vessels give are practically the same, choice between them being generally a question of quantity; both, again, can be brought to table

just as they are, though of the two the casserole looks the best and is the most convenient to handle.

In most Continental households the marmite takes the place assigned to the stock-pot in England. Soups and stews cooked in either pan are more mellow and seem to possess more flavour than in any other make of vessel; and a

THE CUT LEFT TO BECOME COLD.

piece of a joint, like a half-leg or shoulder of mutton, which, being cut, is spoilt for roasting, if cooked gently in these pans, its juices and the steam created supplying what moisture is needed, results in a succulent, savoury dish which can be eaten to the very last morsel, and not a particle wasted but the bone. The same cut, left to become cold before removing from the pan, will be found to be surrounded with jellied gravy.

For birds of doubtful age, again, no better method could be devised than to cook them in this way, which ensures their being tender and prevents the flesh from becoming dry. A little fresh or salt pork, cut in strips and put with them, improves tough and lean birds. The possibility of using a great variety of vegetables in combination with meat is again a boon, adding as it does so much to the range of flavours as well as to actual variety of dishes, so that it becomes almost equivalent to acquiring that new animal for which the unimaginative cook so often sighs. It is by the help of the casserole that a French cook is able to serve us with a beef *à la mode*, with a *daube*, an *aloyau à la bordelaise*, a *fricandeau au jus*, *poitrine à l'oseille*, *poulet à la paysanne*, *à la diable*, *à l'estragon*, and a whole host of savoury entrées combined from scraps, trimmings, giblets, etc.

Let us now take a few of these in detail—a "daube," for instance.

A Daube.—Lean beef, skirting, flank, or stewing steak is used for this, and it is cut into neat, even-sized pieces, about two inches square and half as thick. Brown each piece as quickly as possible in a hot frying-pan with the least rubbing of suet to prevent sticking; the browning is not to mean cooking, but merely to give flavour. Range the

pieces in the casserole, put with them some peeled shallots, or a piece of garlic, a knot of sweet herbs, a carrot cut in rounds, and some strips of fat bacon. Pour in a glassful of red wine and a teacupful of bone stock. Cover the pan closely and set in the oven to cook gently for at least two hours—three if you like. Stir in a teaspoonful of potato-flour, previously wetted, just before bringing the pan to table, in order to thicken the gravy; and remove the bunch of herbs.

For **Beef à la Mode**, a round of beef, neatly boned and tied, such as the London butcher is skilful in preparing, is the best piece you can have, and it should leave but little space in the casserole to spare. Put with it the bunch of herbs as before, also the carrot and three or four small onions peeled; add a cupful of stock, a tablespoonful of aromatic vinegar, several peppercorns, a clove or two, and spoonful of salt. Cover tightly, set in a corner of the oven, and leave it four or five hours if the piece weighed as many pounds, somewhat less if it was of smaller size. Lift it out on to a dish, and surround with the vegetables; skim the fat from the gravy, and pour over.

Fricandeau au Jus, à l'Oseille, etc.—A piece of veal cut from the fillet or the thick part of the

shoulder is taken for this, and freely larded with salt pork, then bound with tapes, if necessary, to keep in shape. It is placed in the casserole with a free sprinkling of salt and pepper, bunch of herbs, one or two root vegetables left in large pieces, an onion, and sufficient dripping or salt butter to give moisture. This is allowed to braise for about two hours; it is then lifted into another dish and put close to the fire to brown the surface, while the gravy is skimmed, and strained, and thickened, previous to pouring around the fricandeau. A purée of fresh sorrel is added to the gravy at this stage, or peeled tomatoes, chicory, salsify, or mushrooms, according as they give a distinctive name to the dish. These garnish and are served with the meat when it is carved.

Poulet à la Paysanne, à l'Estragon, etc.—Put in the casserole two or three tablespoonfuls of salad oil, and a piece of butter the size of an egg; when very hot toss the jointed pieces of fowl in this, turning them about to brown all over. As soon as they have acquired a colour, draw the pan aside, and put with the fowl some fresh onions finely minced, chopped parsley and other herbs, pepper, and a half-pint of stock. Cover, and allow to simmer fully an hour.

Or, instead of parsley, take tarragon leaves and

a less quantity of onion, and flavour the stock with white wine. This sauce is improved by being very slightly thickened.

For **Poulet à la Diable** the joints and pieces would be browned and then liberally peppered, other ingredients being added as before, and the sauce strained, coloured, and made strongly *piquante.*

"A Bird of Doubtful Age."

For **Lapin au Casserole,** the rabbit would be divided into convenient-sized pieces, then floured and browned in hot fat the same way, and, when packed into the pan, would receive strips of salt pork or bacon, liberal seasoning and a bunch of

herbs, onions and any other vegetables liked, sufficient stock to just cover all, and would cook thus for a matter of two or three hours. If not sufficiently brown the gravy can be coloured with a few drops of browning, and, if liked, some red wine can be added. This is served from the casserole without other alteration.

Pigeons and small game birds, especially if it is thought they may be tough, are delicious if stewed in the casserole, a little wine or stock being put with them.

A "poor man's stew" of vegetables is also excellent. It consists of sliced potatoes and onions, parsnips and turnips, some strips of salt pork, pepper and salt, herbs, and a cupful of water. Cook it for about two hours, and you will find it most savoury.

All the above dishes might be served on the ordinary meat-dish if preferred, but would look better in such a case if a garnish of cooked potatoes were given them, the potatoes being shaped with a fancy cutter.

The marmite could be used for any of the dishes where a larger quantity needed to be cooked; but the casserole is preferable where quantities are small, as it is best to fill the pan as nearly as may be. But the marmite makes an excellent hotch-potch, haricot mutton, Irish stew,

and other things of similar order, and the following is a capital winter supper dish :—

Two pounds of the lean breast of veal or mutton ; remove the fat, if any, and cut into even pieces, place them in the marmite with a sprinkling of salt and pepper, some short lengths of celery and leeks, an onion, and teacupful of pearl barley ; add water enough to cover well. Cook gently on the top of the stove for at least two hours, skim, remove fat from the surface ; and the bones if possible ; then serve from the marmite at table, a serviette being folded round it.

For all kinds of vegetable soups and purées I prefer to use the marmite in preference to anything else ; it is excellent, too, for things which have to be kept hot for tardy comers.

THE CASSEROLE READY FOR THE TABLE.

VIII

COOKING IN, AND USING FRENCH FIREPROOF CHINA DISHES

THE methods of cooking which excite our wonder and interest when we are travelling abroad, and which we find it so difficult to imitate when at home, are the result in great measure of the different class of cooking

RAGOUT-DISH.

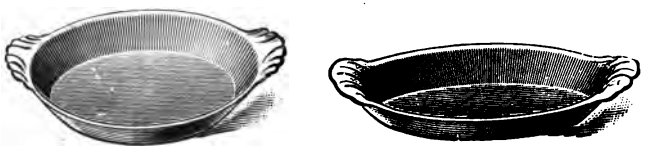
utensils that are in service there. Since foreign restaurants have sprung up in our midst, however, we have become not only more familiarised with the flavour and appearance of French and

German preparations, but we have the advantage of procuring the same means for their reproduction, since these cooks have created the demand for their own tools, and the demand has brought in a supply. The very names of casserole, marmite, pot-au-feu, etc., have crept into common use, and become anglicised in the transition.

The great cleanliness, light weight, and cheapness of clay pottery is a vast deal in its favour, but it has besides, as before remarked, its own peculiar advantages in conveying or educing flavours which no other kind of vessel can give. In fireproof china we get the same qualities in a more refined form : the elegancies of the menu should be left for this ware, not merely because it needs rather more careful handling, but because every dish is itself ornamental and intended for table service. Fireproof clay, which, as marmite and casserole, we considered in our previous chapter, costs about a third of the price of fireproof china. Just here, however, we want to give our attention to the specialities belonging to the latter, which in the small household or flat are particularly welcome and valuable.

When looking over a number of shapes we should probably be attracted by the shallow eared dishes, oval and round, which are made in several sizes. These suggest at once such dainty

breakfast dishes as scalloped and buttered eggs, eggs in cream, buttered tomatoes, flaked lobster, creamed crab, toasted scallops, and cod-roes. To such you may add Welsh rarebit for luncheon



SHALLOW EARED DISHES.

or supper, and another very charming dish in which cheese figures, which I give you in detail farther on. In the same ware there is an admirable little frying-pan, with handle; I know of nothing better for the making of an omelet.

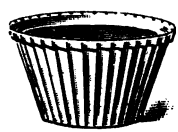
AN OMELET-PAN.

For baking eggs singly, with butter or cream, there are the dainty little "cocottes" at sixpence and sevenpence each, and at breakfast-time we see the beauty of coffee-pots and milk-jugs which can be brought straight from the stove to the table. This ware is again most seductive when

it takes the form of ramaquin and soufflé cases. What daintier finish to a dinner can we desire than the savoury *bonne-bouche* which the ramaquin presents? and what sweet is so universal a favourite as the crisp soufflé, with its wine or chocolate sauce? Then, finally, there is the game-pie mould, in crust colour, which answers admirably for all kinds of salmis and *réchauffées* of game or poultry.

If these things are a little expensive at the first outlay, we gain eventually in the grace

COCOTTE.



RAMAQUIN CASE.

which they add, not only to the table itself, but to our menus; their very use seems to exert a refining influence. As to the cost, one each of all those just mentioned (with the exception of the ramaquin cases) would suffice to start with, if a medium size is selected.

Consider we now a few choice recipes suitable to these dishes:—

Petit Plat Mi-Carême.—Take the shallow dish first mentioned, put into it a few small bits of salt butter. Slice thinly some stale Gruyère or

Cheddar cheese—arrange this in a ring, leaving the centre of the dish free; into that break two or more eggs; sprinkle with pepper, a pinch of salt, and set the dish in the oven for barely ten minutes. Eat immediately.

Oeufs à la Crème.—Butter the dish, pour in a very small cupful of milk; when this is hot break into it as many eggs as the dish takes easily, cover, and let them poach until just set. Season with celery-salt and spiced pepper, then cover completely with thick cream; set back in the oven to become thoroughly hot, and serve. A little chopped celery (green) can be sprinkled on the surface as garnish.

Oysters au Gratin.—This same shallow dish is admirable for serving up oysters. Drain off the juice, and beard a dozen of them; butter the dish, sprinkle it thickly with breadcrumbs; drop in the oysters, squeeze lemon-juice over them, sprinkle with salt and pepper, add their own juice and more crumbs; lastly, a few bits of butter on the top; then bake quickly for six or seven minutes in hot oven.

Or you can do oysters in cream, as in the recipe just given for eggs.

Lobster au Gratin.—Make about a teacupful of good white sauce, with butter and milk, flavouring it with lemon-juice; add a drop or two of

Tabasco, then the flaked meat of a cooked lobster; whip with a fork, and pile it lightly into the oval dish; sprinkle the surface with crumbs; set it into the oven to become hot and to brown ever so lightly; then, on withdrawing, sprinkle the coral in a powder over the top. You can use the flesh of a crab in the same way.

Scallops.—These are better cut into rather small pieces, and gently heated through with a morsel of butter, and a cover kept over them; before serving, remove the cover, sprinkle with pepper, a few crisp biscuit raspings, and just toast them under the gas grill for a minute, not more.

Cod-roes are cut into slices, and fried or baked, using very little butter, and covering them well with breadcrumbs; a little lemon-juice squeezed over is an improvement.

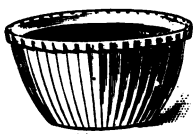
Tomatoes.—If cut in half and baked *au gratin*, with butter and breadcrumbs, make a nice dish to bring to table as accompaniment to grilled or toasted bacon. They take but a few minutes to cook in a gas oven, but, when done, add that spot of bright colour to the table and that piquancy to the homelier dish which makes a world of difference on a cheerless morning.

All the foregoing are simple little dishes, easily made by a dainty cook who has one of these shallow fireproof china dishes at her service. They

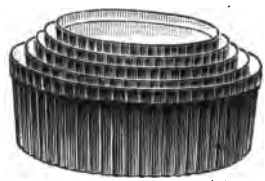
are all well worth attempting, and others quite as appetising would quickly suggest themselves to the mind.

Let us take next the ramaquin and soufflé cases :—

Cheese ramaquins are, perhaps, nicest of all,



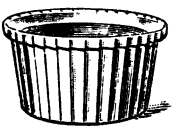
CIRCULAR RAMAQUIN.



SOUFFLÉ CASES.

and they are never better than when filled with the same mixture as for cheese fondue, which, being baked, rises up crisp and brown, and makes a little picture worthy of admiration. For the mixture, you need to whip separately the whites and yolks of two fresh eggs ; add to the yolks a large tablespoonful of finely grated stale cheese or dried Parmesan, the same amount of bread-crumbs soaked in milk, pepper and salt ; then stir in the whites, and half fill the cases, which have been previously oiled with butter. Bake from five to ten minutes ; then set each ramaquin on a plate covered with a fancy doyley, and place before the diner ere there has been time for it to fall.

You can also use a very light batter for ramaquins, and flavour with curaçoa; or, instead of cheese in the previous recipe, use finely chopped nuts and a flavouring of Kirsch or Prunelle, and, leaving out the pepper, add a pinch of sugar.



UPRIGHT RAMAQUIN.

To make a soufflé is by no means a difficult achievement, but success depends entirely upon the attention given to minute details, and this is why, perhaps, so very often it is *not* a success.

To begin with, the flour must be of a particularly light quality; cornflour does very well, but the French cook uses fécule, or potato-flour, which is far better. This you find among the Groult preparations, and a packet will last quite a long time.

Take a pint of milk and put it on to boil, using one of your lined saucepans for the purpose; put with the milk whatever is going to give the soufflé its distinctive flavour, be it a piece of a pod of vanilla, or the grated rind of an orange or lemon; add to it a quarter of a pound of lump sugar, and, when it is nearly boiling, stir

in a heaping tablespoonful of fécule, previously wetted with cold milk; stir rapidly after this until a stiff paste is formed, then withdraw from the fire, and let it become cold. You can make this paste some time in advance. When ready to use, add to it by degrees the beaten yolks of three eggs, and, lastly, the whisked whites. Oil the soufflé mould and turn the batter into it, not allowing it to fill more than a third of the depth. Set it promptly in a brisk oven, and bake from fifteen to twenty minutes; serve when risen and brown without a moment's delay, simply sprinkling powdered sugar over the top. Rum made hot, or sweet wine, or a thin chocolate sauce, all accord well as accompaniments, or the soufflé may be steamed for about thirty minutes, when it makes a most delicate sweet for an invalid. You can make a savoury soufflé, if that is preferred, by adding pepper and salt to the paste in the first instance, then grated cheese at the time when the eggs are worked in. Groult's chestnut-flour also makes an excellent soufflé, to which a few boiled and mashed chestnuts can be added. Hot cream should accompany this last.

The game pie-dish, or other oval covered dishes in fireproof china, serve, as I said at first, for all kinds of salmis and *réchauffées* of meat,

game, or poultry. It is better to make the gravy or sauce first of all in a saucepan, as it will probably need boiling; then to turn it into the inner dish, and lay in this whatever is going to

COVERED PIE-DISH.

be reheated. Remains of game and poultry are improved by being just lightly browned in butter before they are put into the sauce; but meat may be cut in thin slices or squares, and be allowed to simmer as long as time allows. The piquancy and quality of the sauce or gravy, with its dash of wine, makes the chief element of success in all such *réchauffées*, and the ornamental dish itself accomplishes the rest.

GAME PIE-DISH, CRUST COLOUR.

IX

THE RIGHT SELECTION AND COMBINATION OF FOODS

THIS is the soul and secret of economy : you may economise, and be liberally fed ; you may be lavish, and yet starve. You may spend on all the rarities and search for all the appetisers, and yet produce an unsatisfactory, unsatisfying table. And although it is impossible to lay down any rules for guidance that will apply to all conditions, for individual peculiarities vary as much as individual means, yet there is always this to be said—there is an eternal fitness in things, a fitness in pleasing the sight, the palate, the season, the needs ; and, in doing this, or learning how to do it, we find out what makes economy of living—for us.

For instance, fish eaten alone may be easy of digestion and nourishing, but it is neither satisfying nor economical ; serve with it potatoes and sauce, a little cucumber and piquant dressing,

and you have supplied the necessary fat, mineral, and bulk that was wanted to make a meal. Fruit and nuts are an example of perfect harmony as a dessert, because nuts give us nourishment in a concentrated form with oils, and fruit abounds in elements whose office it is to dissolve and carry off obstructing matters, and they also increase the activity of the digestion.

Mineral matter, which we sometimes disregard in our daily rations, is needed to give solidity to the bones, tissues, and muscles; we find this in green vegetables, fruits, and some cereals. In some green vegetables we find potash in excess, and have to counteract this by taking common salt; hence it is an instinct of true taste that leads us to cook greens in salted water, to eat salt with potatoes, and so forth. We serve green vegetables that are strong in mineral salts with meats which are rich in nitrogen. Wheat, when left with all its natural constituents, is an almost perfect food, but in bread it lacks fat or oil, hence our craving for butter. With cooked cereals we find cream far more palatable than milk, and the reason is not far to seek. Rice is pure starch when served alone, but in combination with milk or broth it forms perfect food.

Green vegetables are more nutritious, more

palatable, and more appetising if served with a cream or egg sauce, after being cooked, pressed, and turned into a shape. This applies also to many root vegetables, like turnips, parsnips, Jerusalem artichokes and salsify, celery and celeriac. I need hardly say how much a butter sauce improves every kind of beans and peas. The place of salads is with the green vegetables, for although there is but a small amount of nourishment to be gained from them, they are invaluable as blood purifiers, tempters of appetite, and help the digestion of other things.

But in addition to the scientific study we bring to bear upon the selection of food, there is the very important factor of good taste to consider: it is bad taste to bring two fried dishes, two white ones, two things closely resembling one another yet clashing in flavour, two distinct acids, two opposed sauces, close together in the menu. Food may be well cooked, and at the same time badly combined; hence, again, it is a failure, and pleases no one. As a rule, one may take it that what is "considered correct" is, generally speaking, found to be so really; for the *chef* who rules in club, and hotel, and restaurant, is a man of æsthetic judgment, and his critics above stairs are adepts in the art of dining, hence what he dictates and they approve becomes the

standard by which outsiders judge, condemn, and are influenced.

In the small household, with limited help, the artistic and scientific arrangement of a menu resolves itself rather into a study first of convenience. A stove cannot be crowded with a number of things all requiring attention at the same moment, nor can a cook fry, make sauce, crush a purée, and dress vegetables all at the same time. Hence what it is possible to do and what one would like to do have to be taken as moderators one of another. But in studying the matter, it is often found that the possible grows on the imagination, and that, where there is a will to do, there can generally be found a capacity for doing. Hence it is well to let the question of "What shall we have for dinner to-day?" resolve itself into a blend of harmony, capability, and suitability.

Here I give, as suggestions, a list of such combined foods as are correctly served together—

With all clear soups, serve bread or rolls, baked crusts or toast.
" " thick white soups, serve grated cheese.
" " fish soups, serve light flaky rusks or biscuits, or croutons.
" " rich and thick soups like mock turtle, serve hard-boiled eggs sliced, and cut lemon.

With all boiled fish, serve sauce Hollandaise, parsley or shrimp sauce, boiled potatoes, cucumber salad with French dressing.

„ „ baked fish, serve potato balls and crisp lettuce salad with dressing.

„ „ fried fish, if small, serve Tartar sauce, lemon, and cut bread-and-butter.

„ „ fried fish, if large, serve boiled or whipped potato, lemon-sauce, or maître d'hôtel butter, and bread.

„ plain boiled cod, boiled potatoes and parsnips, cream sauce.

„ creamed cod, halibut, or turbot, serve whipped potatoes.

„ oysters and most shell-fish, serve lemon or vinegar, brown bread and butter, and a lettuce salad afterwards.

„ broiled chops, serve creamed potatoes and peas, a sharp sauce.

„ breaded chops, serve tomato sauce, chips, or baked potatoes.

„ braised or roast mutton, serve a macedoine of vegetables and brown sauce.

„ mutton *en casserole*, serve boiled rice, mashed turnips or potatoes.

„ rolled mutton or steak, serve tomato sauce, potato croquettes, stewed carrots or French beans.

„ broiled beef steaks, serve lettuce salad with plain French dressing.

„ braised steak and Bordelaise sauce, serve potato balls, French beans or mushrooms.

„ roast beef, any green vegetable or cauliflower, or chestnuts in brown sauce, parsnip fritters, Yorkshire pudding.

With boiled beef, serve boiled potatoes or white beans, carrots and parsnips.

„ fillets of beef, serve mushrooms and sauce, potato croquettes.

„ cold roast beef, serve cream horseradish sauce, salad and roasted potatoes.

„ cold boiled beef, serve a carrot salad, mayonnaise sauce, mashed potatoes.

„ cold tongue, serve a potato salad, brown bread and butter.

„ veal cutlets and tomato sauce, serve rice balls, peas, canned corn.

„ fricandeau of veal, serve spinach, cauliflower, purée of sorrel, chicory, or endive salad.

„ cold veal, serve mayonnaise of celery, mashed potatoes.

„ baked or boiled ham, champagne, cider, or apple sauce, or currant jelly.

„ roast pork, serve baked potatoes, apple purée, green vegetables.

„ sausages, serve baked potatoes, cooked celery, tomatoes, fried apples.

„ roast lamb, serve cooked cucumbers, spinach or peas, mint sauce, and new potatoes.

„ boiled chickens, rice and egg sauce, serve boiled onions or celery, sea-kale, and boiled ham.

„ roast chicken, rice or potato croquettes, serve stewed chestnuts in sauce, stewed celery or peas.

„ casserole chicken, serve its own vegetables and sauce, peas, fritters.

„ cold chicken or fowl, serve ham and mayonnaise salad, lettuce or celery.

„ roast turkey, potato or chestnut croquettes, and cranberry sauce, serve sea-kale or Brussels sprouts.

With cold turkey, serve tomato aspic, nut and lettuce salad.

„ guinea fowl or ptarmigan, serve broiled bacon, red wine sauce, hominy or rice fritters.

„ roast duck, potato and onion stuffing, serve browned turnips, stewed salsify, green peas, or asparagus.

„ cold ditto, serve aspic jelly, chicory, dandelion, or orange salad.

„ wild duck, serve orange salad, rice fritters or baked breadcrumbs.

„ pheasant, serve browned crumbs, potato croquettes, cranberry jelly.

„ small birds on toast, serve their own gravy or sauce, and spaghetti.

„ pigeons, serve rolls of fried bacon, stewed celery or prunes.

„ rabbit, stewed or boiled, serve onions and turnips, potatoes.

„ venison, baked potatoes, and any delicate vegetable like marrow, artichokes, stewed cabbage or kale.

„ stewed sweetbreads, serve mushrooms and peas in same sauce.

„ fried or braised sweetbreads, serve brown sauce, and peas.

„ croquettes and rissoles of meat or poultry, serve peas, brown sauce, mushrooms, and lettuce salad.

„ croquettes of fish, serve butter sauce, potatoes *au gratin* or creamed, and crisp rolls.

„ fried entrées, serve a brown sauce and salad.

„ white entrées, serve a cream sauce, and rice, or whipped potato.

Serve with any meat one starchy and one

green vegetable or salad; the last may be placed on the table before dinner is announced.

Bread and potatoes need not accompany one another at the same time, nor should rice and potatoes. Severe acids overpower and neutralise the alkaline solutions of the mouth, therefore vinegar and all such things should not be taken with bread or starchy foods, but only in combination with oil in salads: remember that, as vinegar preserves things outside the stomach, so it renders their digestion difficult inside. Spices and condiments are stimulants, and in moderation they quicken digestion. Much salt is apt to dull the palate and destroy the delicate perception of other flavours, although, if sparingly used in the cooking of food, it brings out the natural flavour.

Tea should never be taken when eating shellfish, or fish of any kind; as an astringent it hardens the fibres, and it has the same effect on meat. On the other hand, coffee increases the activity of the intestinal glands, and sometimes acts as a laxative. Water should not be taken in large quantities with food, but, if not iced, it may be drunk before and after. It helps towards an interchange of materials throughout the body, and aids the absorption of new materials into the blood and tissues.

Milk should never be served with meat, nor

wherever an acid has been introduced into a dish. A cup of black coffee, sufficiently strong, taken after a meal, prevents fermentation and assists digestion.

Ices in the middle of a meal, and frozen sweets at the end, are unnatural, and out of all order, but they are fashionable, and many profess to like them on that account. A cold sweet may be acceptable, particularly a fruit jelly or salad, but it should not be iced.

Ripe cheese, in small portions, taken at the end of a dinner assists digestion; heavy cheese should form the main part of any meal it is chosen for, itself being assisted by salad, an apple, or some condiment; or if served as rarebit, it may have boiled onions added to it, or celery.

Avoid too high seasoning in anything; it is destructive of its own flavour, and if constantly practised dulls the finer perceptions of taste, while inducing a state of chronic irritation of the stomach.

X

A FEW SAVOURY MADE DISHES AND ENTRÉES

THE directions for a few selected dishes which follow are given to assist the young housewife who is in search of something novel and dainty wherewith to "lengthen" a menu already compiled, when an unexpected guest has appeared on the scene, and to help in the compilation when a planned dinner is in project. Many of these entrées might serve as principal dishes in the bill of fare for a small dinner-party.

As a rule, the entrée is a dish served before the joint, the entremet is one which follows it; an entremet is often served cold, when it is designated a *chaudfroid*. Both entrée and entremet can be made a means of utilising remains of other dishes left over; the chaudfroid, indeed, is generally composed of small, solid bits of meat, poultry, or game which remain, or have else been cooked for

RICE CROQUETTES, CAULIFLOWER AND SAUCE.

POTATO SHAPE, FLAKED COD AND PARSLEY.

MACARONI AND MUSHROOM TIMBALE.

the purpose; these are served in aspic or jelly sauce. A ragôut or mince may be served in the same sauce and set in fancy moulds, or used as the filling of a centre of aspic. Let us take the making of these first.

Whatever is used, be it meat, fish, poultry, game, or vegetable, it must be very neatly and tastefully shaped; there must be a contrast of colour and material, if possible, and something that will serve as garnish. The next important point is the absolutely smooth coating of sauce or jelly, and as the preparation of this constitutes the chief difficulty, we will begin by its mixing and making. The ingredients of a chaudfroid sauce depend on the colour it is intended to be: a white sauce has béchamel or velouté for its foundation; a brown one has espagnole, or is thickened with brown *roux*; a red or terra-cotta is produced by varying mixtures of tomato and other brown sauce, and pink is produced by tinging béchamel or velouté with cochineal. Other vegetable colourings give other shades, green, yellow, etc. Driessen's Foundation sauces, which we include in our Store Closet list, are excellent for the purpose, but if not at hand, then make the foundation by mixing together an ounce each of butter and flour and diluting with ¼ pint of liquid—very clear stock or water; when this has boiled and is

perfectly smooth, add, whilst hot, an equal quantity of strong aspic jelly, that is, jelly which is quite solid when cold. The aspic jelly gives the glassy, transparent appearance when cold, but needs some skill in masking. The sauce thus made must cool down before it is put over the object to be masked, yet it must be still warm enough to flow freely. Whilst using stand the pan which holds the sauce in a basin of tepid water to keep it at the right point as long as possible. Hold each object which it is desired to coat separately upon a broad-bladed palette knife, and with the other hand pour a spoonful of the sauce over it, then slide off on to a dish to cool. A final coating of liquid aspic gives a brighter glaze, if such is needed. In masking a larger object, like a fowl or joint, stand it on a wire sieve or grid, slanting it a little, and pour the sauce freely over it, as far as possible covering the whole surface at one sweep, leaving no bare places anywhere.

The arrangement of a chaudfroid is largely a matter of taste, but at least it gives scope for much originality. All depends on what the materials are which are being used. You may line a mould with aspic, and, when this has set, fill in with pieces of meat, fish, or poultry, and sauce; then set the whole with more aspic, and, if the mould is a circular one, with hollow centre, this

may be filled with chopped aspic of a different colour. Much ornamentation should not be attempted, it is better taste to aim at simple effects; but in small moulds one may cut a star out of truffles or a gherkin, and place this at the bottom, or with cold boiled white of egg make other fancy device. The individual mould is always a favourite form of chaudfroid, for a little aspic, and a spoonful of minced chicken in cream, and a little garnish make together a dainty trifle at small cost.

With a good brown sauce we make a pretty chaudfroid of cutlets, or of small birds boned and stuffed, then cooked and cut in half, covered with sauce, and arranged in a circle round a little heap of chopped aspic or of vegetables *en macédoine*. Cutlets should be cut very small, and delicately fried; small birds are baked or grilled, and a fowl that is boiled or braised should not be cut up until it is cold. All rough bits, skin and gristle, must be removed before anything else is done. Fish is boiled or baked under buttered paper, then skinned whilst hot and broken into pieces of the shape and size required, but not coated until cold. Tinned fish, in flaked pieces or dice, mixed with sauce, makes a good filling for aspic cases. For anything very special, like the breast portions of a chicken or of game, a

little whipped cream is mixed with liquid aspic, the meat being cut or minced very small and lightly mixed in, then moulded and set on ice.

In making fancy shapes remember that an aspic lining must set firm before any filling is put in, and that the filling must itself be just on the point of setting also, though still fluid enough to fall into place.

In attempting entrées and all made dishes you find out how very necessary it becomes to have the store closet well stocked with herbs and spices and things of like kind. Without these such savoury combinations as we seek are very difficult to attain. Entrées are not so much a question of expense as of management ; it takes but a little material to evolve something of this nature, but that little must be good and choice.

The mincing machine or chopper, and the vegetable cutter are invaluable aids, and the foundation sauces, the colouring and flavouring essences, the piquant vinegars and other spices, all add their service.

Remains of meat, even the veriest scraps, when passed through the mincer and mixed with aromatic herbs and seasoning, with a little fat ham or bacon also minced, a few crumbs soaked in gravy, and enough sauce to mould all together, may be shaped into diminutive cutlets, then

dipped in batter and fried in boiling fat, and piled on a dish, a tiny piece of macaroni inserted in each to represent bone. They need a thick gravy to accompany them, therefore are best served in a silver dish, the gravy poured into the centre.

Curries of vegetables, or of eggs, make excellent entrées, and a salmi or savoury stew, with wine, one of a richer class. Fillets of veal, grenadines, veal *en blanquette* (that is, in a sauce to which cream has been added), and fillets of beef garnished after any manner you please, are also entrée dishes. So again are little made-up savouries which are served in pastry cases, like bouchées, timbales, etc. And macaroni in various forms may come into this category also.

The pastry cases should be made of flaky or very short crust, as this is really nicer than puff paste, but if a vol-au-vent is desired only puff paste is possible. The sauce used with the filling of a vol-au-vent is rich also, generally with a cream addition; and a very white meat, or fish in flakes, or picked shrimps are added to it.

One of the nicest little entrées you can wish for, and easily made, is a well-flavoured mince of meat in croustades garnished with carefully poached eggs.

The following short list may be useful as a guide, and suggest others :—

CURRIED EGGS.

CUTLETS À LA JARDINIÈRE.

SAVOURY STEW

Beef crouquettes or rissoles.
Beef olives ; minced beef in cases of fried bread, with eggs.
Mutton cutlets in aspic ; ditto masked in tomato jelly.
Mutton cutlets served hot round a jardinière or macédoine.
Sheep's kidneys *sautés*, with bacon and mushrooms.
Veal cutlet, *aux petits pois* ; ditto *fricassée*.
Sweetbreads, *fricassée*, in cream sauce, or stewed.
Fowl or chicken *au blanc*, curried, in mayonnaise, or minced.
Pigeons halved, with prunes, mushrooms, or in aspic.
Small game birds on toast, *en salmi*, in aspic, etc.
Ragoûts financières ; curries of vegetables, of fish, etc.
Bouchées of poultry, minced veal, shrimps, etc.
Chartreuses of game or poultry.
Stuffed tomatoes, mushrooms, cucumbers, aubergines, etc.

Entremets (after the joint) :—

Ham, in slices, hot, with champagne or wine sauce.
Ham, in slices, cold, with sauce tartare.
Tongue, glazed, in aspic, or *en salade*.
Mayonnaises of all kinds.
Aspic jellies, with or without other filling.
Omelettes, *aux fines herbes*, *aux champignons*, *au sucre*, *au confiture*, *au rum*, etc.
Macaroni with cheese ; spaghetti, etc.
Cauliflower *au gratin*, *au fromage*, etc.
Soufflées. *Beignets*. *Frittura*.
Jellies. Fruit salads.

FISH CUTLETS.

SMALL GAME BIRDS ON TOAST.

OMELET, "AUX FINES HERBES."

XI

THE COOKING OF VEGETABLES AND DRESSING OF SALADS

IN fine cookery—cookery which belongs to the finer order of kitchen which we are dealing with, and which is the reasonable outcome of better utensils carefully used—the care with which we treat vegetables is one of the most noticeable features, or it ought to be. We cannot admit slovenliness any more than we can admit monotony in choice, for both are the result of ignorance, and we are *not* ignorant!

Well-dressed vegetables give an air of distinction to any repast, however simple; a daintily served salad gives a finish to the same. Although we have spoken of savoury dishes of vegetables as entrées, etc., as a rule it is not made-up or savoury dressings which we advocate, for very often the more plainly a fresh vegetable is served the more acceptable it is; invariably this is so if it accompanies meat. The savoury dishes are

for serving alone, and in place of meat. Therefore, in considering their simpler forms of dressing or cooking, we have to bear in mind that the main objects in view are the preservation of colour, flavour, and character, while perfect digestibility is no less a desideratum. Many people look askance at vegetables, believing them to be difficult of digestion, but if found to be so it is invariably due to their being insufficiently cooked or over-dressed.

To secure a good colour we must have the vegetables perfectly fresh to begin with; then they must be thoroughly cleaned before any cooking process is attempted. Never be persuaded into buying anything stale of this kind. Personally, I would often prefer to buy from a coster's stall on this account than from a shop, simply because the coster has been to market and got his load straight from the market-gardener, and he sells it out rapidly, whereas the greengrocer has many devices for keeping over stock that sells more slowly. The ideas of country folk give one some idea of what fresh and stale vegetables mean, in their opinion. I know that in the district where cauliflowers are grown in great quantity the field hands will not eat them if they have been cut longer than twelve hours; the goodness has all gone out of them,

they say. You have but to contrast the flavour of limp cabbages and of those freshly cut, of a cauliflower two days old and one just gathered, to realise what they mean. We in town cannot be so exacting, but we can avoid eating what is obviously stale, and we need not delude ourselves by imagining that soaking in water will restore quality. *It will not.*

Root vegetables, which keep fresh a long time if buried in earth, need thorough scrubbing before they are pared, and they should lie in cold water a little time before cooking. Gritty things, like sea-kale, celery, salsify, etc., which are earthed up in order to blanch them, need to lie in salt and water and receive most careful washing right into the very heart; and green vegetables, into which slugs and caterpillars find their easy way, require salt in the water to dislodge them. From all vegetables pick out dark and discoloured spots, decayed or broken leaves, as these may spoil the flavour of the rest. Pare old potatoes thinly, and scrape or rub the new ones with a coarse cloth. Turnips will bear a thick peeling taken from them, as this is often a woody fibre; parsnips and carrots, after scrubbing, can be scraped. Salsify, after scraping, needs throwing into water with vinegar, as it so quickly discolours. In washing salad, which

it is always best to do, unless you gather it yourself out of your own garden when simply wiping the leaves *may* suffice, the drying is of special importance: wire baskets, which allow of swinging the leaves in the open air, are the nicest things to use, otherwise a clean linen cloth taken at the four corners; but this last breaks the tender young lettuce, and a better way is to let the leaves lie and drain for an hour or so before the salad is wanted. Water in a salad is its ruin. Leeks need much and careful washing, but onions must not touch water.

Unless otherwise expressly stated, all vegetables should be put to cook in boiling water containing salt. While root vegetables should boil thus with the lid of the pan *on*, green vegetables should have no cover, or the cover be tilted; the reason in both cases is the retention of the colour.

Many root vegetables when peeled and sliced cook extremely well in a casserole or other vessel with well-fitting lid, with only a little butter or dripping for moisture; they are very savoury so treated: and a mixture, say of potatoes, parsnips, onions, and herbs is very good; or carrots cut up as though they were French beans, and a pan filled with them, a sprinkling of salt and pepper, some butter, and a teaspoonful of vinegar put in, the lid closed down, and an hour's steady

simmering given, produces a dish very popular in Dutch households. Very savoury it is too.

Sea-kale, celery, and asparagus, which when served lie evenly in the dish, need trimming and tying in bundles before boiling; but in boiling asparagus, if you have not a proper pan which keeps the stalks standing upright, you must so arrange that the tops do not go into water until the stalk ends are nearly tender, otherwise the tips will be liable to fall off before the rest is cooked. Chicory is boiled like sea-kale, and, when served with white sauce, makes a delicious change in spring-time, when our choice in vegetables is somewhat reduced.

Beetroot needs very careful washing, lest the fine skin should be rubbed off and the flavour be lost; but it needs hours of steady boiling to make the root tender. It should not be skinned until cold, unless it is wanted for a hot dish, with some sharp sauce. Usually it is one of our salad reserves.

Spinach needs the most thorough washing in several waters, and a French cook will take the trouble to strip all the larger leaves down by the mid-rib. If crushed down into a pan, a liberal sprinkling of salt added, there is no need of more water, what drains from the leaves being sufficient to make steam, and then less pressing suffices.

When spinach is nearly cooked it should be drained, then returned to its pan with a good piece of butter, pepper, and more salt, and simmered gently.

Sorrel, young nettle-tops, and tender young greens of any kind, likewise lettuce, should be cooked the same as spinach, the place of which they can quite easily take.

Green cabbages and sprouts are the better for having a pinch of carbonate of soda, as well as a liberal dose of salt, added to the water in which they are boiled; and if green peas are at all past their first youth they will benefit by the same addition. Broad beans must boil in water also salted, or they may boil with a piece of bacon and be all the better therefor; if tough, they should be drained from the water after a time, and simmered with butter in a stew-pan for some time longer. French beans or scarlet runners need careful stringing; the former are generally broken in pieces, the latter sliced up, and both are boiled in salted water, a pinch of carbonate of soda often being an improvement. All dried beans and peas, lentils, etc., need long previous soaking, always overnight, and even more is an advantage. Put them on in cold water, and add a piece of an onion, but refrain from putting in salt until they have nearly finished

cooking, when salt, pepper, and butter or dripping may be added with good advantage ; or serve them with a curry sauce, or with melted butter and parsley.

Vegetable marrows we find somewhat tasteless and watery, because we rarely eat them until they are fully grown or overgrown ; whereas, if they are cut when about as long as the hand and not much thicker than cucumbers, they are quite a different thing. At this stage they should be cooked with the skin on, and without the seeds being removed—indeed the seeds have barely formed at all. After boiling until tender, they are drained, divided in half and peeled, tossed in butter and served on a fried crouton, with a mince of mushroom or tomato, well-seasoned in the centre, thus making a very tempting dish ; or serve them plain with a creamy sauce.

Mushrooms need skinning and the stalks cutting out, then to be stewed or simmered in butter, or fried, or added to any other stew already cooking. The tiny "button" mushrooms are added to sauces without previous cooking.

The forms which potatoes may be made to take are almost legion, while at the same time they are never nicer than when plainly boiled. With cold cooked potatoes we may make a variety of cases and borders—that is, if the potatoes have

been mashed down whilst warm; a better way still is to rub them through a wire sieve, and add to the purée thus obtained the other ingredients—that is, a little butter, salt and pepper, and perhaps an egg to form a paste. With this mixture you may form balls or roses, pipings, frills, borders, crusts, shapes of all kinds, and even mock-pastry. To fry without previous boiling it is necessary to use a deep pan with plenty of fat—melted suet is the best for the purpose,—and, after cutting the potatoes as desired, fill a frying-basket with them and plunge it in. Keep them in cold water, however, until the whole lot are ready, then dry very thoroughly on a cloth. The fat should be very hot, and the potatoes become brown and crisp in a short time, otherwise they will be tough and sodden. Drain well, sprinkle with salt, and serve at once. A salad of cold boiled potatoes sliced is very delicious if nicely dressed with mayonnaise and garnished with chopped cress or parsley.

Cauliflower *au fromage* has been mentioned in our list of dishes suitable for entremets; herewith is the recipe. Boil a large white cauliflower and drain; break carefully into parts. Make a small quantity of good white sauce, and stir into it two or three spoonfuls of grated Parmesan, and add a pinch of cayenne pepper. Butter a fancy fireproof china dish, put in the broken cauliflower, a part

of the sauce, more cauliflower and more sauce, sprinkle with more cheese, and place the dish in the oven to brown the surface.

For *au gratin* the sauce would be excluded, butter being used, a few breadcrumbs, and more cheese, or the cheese can be left out and gravy take the place of butter; then bake in the gratin-dish and serve.

Leeks are very nice served plainly boiled, or with a cheese sauce, and they make most excellent soup.

Aubergines have also been mentioned. Although this is not a vegetable commonly known, it is so delicate and delicious that it deserves more fame. Of a purple colour outside, it is creamy-white within, and, after paring it, should be split down lengthwise, the soft interior part removed, and then (in a fireproof china dish, of course) be simmered with butter, and, when quite tender, a teaspoonful of gravy or cream added, some pepper and salt, and served in the dish as it is.

Cucumbers are still another vegetable too little known, except as a salad. They boil exceedingly well; they make a delicious creamy soup; they also grate or cut into cubes for serving with fried fish, smelts and herrings. Boiled cucumbers, with white sauce, are a suitable accompaniment to either lamb or veal.

There is celeriac, too, only half appreciated amongst us, yet this is a winter vegetable we ought to prize. It is so easily cooked, needing only to be peeled and boiled in salted water ; but you may serve it with a sauce if you will, or simple gravy, and it accords with any kind of meat or poultry. It is a cross between turnips and celery, having the form of one and flavour of the other. Cold celeriac is delicious as a salad.

A word as to parsley that is used for cooking, whether fried or chopped. Fried parsley should be crisp, yet of a bright green ; it cannot be this if the fat used is too hot. When all other frying is done, draw the pan aside and let it cool a minute or two ; then drop in the picked sprigs, which must be dried after washing. Let them fry gently for a full minute or more, then drain. Parsley for sauce ought, after washing, to be carefully picked from the stalks, then chopped till it seems impossible to make it finer, and again wrung in the corner of a cloth after dipping it through water ; if wrung quite dry it will look afterwards as if dried and sifted, and will mix pleasantly with the sauce, without giving it a rank flavour. Always boil up once before it is accounted finished.

And now a word as to salads and their dressings. There are few things in the vegetable realm which cannot be turned to account as a salad, but

the true salad material is, of course, lettuce or endive. Lettuce includes quite a number of varieties of growth, from the tender *petite laitue* of the gardener's weeding out at the time of transplantation, to the "Gran'mere" lettuces which have stood the winter bravely, and begin to form hearts with the first warm days of spring. There is *coquille*, or corn salad, as Americans call it; there is blanched dandelion and chicory, both slightly bitter, but splendid for their wholesome effect on health; watercress, and cos lettuce, crisp and succulent; endive, *escarolle*, not to mention General Tom Thumb and a whole tribe of plump white hearts. And there are herbs to give flavour, from the spring onion onwards.

When you have got your salad and its herb, washed and dried it, you begin the most important part of the process of dressing by shredding or cutting it sufficiently small to be easily eaten. Some people stand aghast at the idea of cutting salad with a steel knife, but it is often far the best thing to do, for appearance sake as well as comfort, and if quickly and lightly done the steel knife does no harm either to the salad or to you. A Frenchman would rub the inside of the bowl with a clove of garlic; this is perhaps more than an English palate cares for, but the flavour of an onion is invariably an improvement, given in some

form. To rub the bowl gives just that *soupçon* which is elusive yet definite.

What we know as French dressing is often quite sufficient for all occasions. You make it by mixing first salt, pepper, made mustard, and one spoonful of vinegar together; then add three spoonfuls of oil, and toss the whole freely. Do not spoil a salad by adding too many mixtures of material or of flavours. A hard-boiled and sliced egg may be an addition worth having, but it is not essential, and beets should be kept to serve alone; so also should stringy mustard and cress.

A mayonnaise dressing of beaten yolk of egg, oil, salt and pepper, and just a sufficiency of vinegar or lemon-juice, is easy to make if care be exercised to add the oil but slowly at first. This dressing keeps for some time. Lemon-juice and cream can be substituted for vinegar and oil if preferred.

POTATO SALAD.

APPLE AND NUT SALAD.

CREAM CHEESE SALAD.

EGGS, AND CRESS SALAD.

XII

GOOD COFFEE AND TEA

WHERE, for want of space, entertainment on a large scale is out of the question, we must necessarily pay rather more attention to those minor forms represented by gatherings of a less formal character, like tea and coffee parties, musical and card evenings, suiting our outlay and style of refreshments thereto. It becomes, therefore, quite well worth while acquiring a little reputation for the making of good coffee and tea, and to have the right means for producing these, by which I mean a good make of *cafetière*, and for the tea an infuser. The first requisite for both, however, is boiling water, and, presumptuous though it sounds to say it, very few people know how to boil water properly. A friend of mine, who has kept a cooking-school for something like twenty years, assures me that, out of the hundreds of women who have passed through her classes in that time, not more than fifty could tell

her when they came what was meant by "boiling water," or the different temperatures at which it boils, and what chemical changes take place during and after boiling.

We boil water in the kitchen for two purposes —for the cooking of water itself to remove dangerous germs, and for the cooking of other materials in it. The boiling-point of water under ordinary conditions is 212° Fahr. When bubbles form on the bottom of the kettle, come up slowly to the surface, and rupture quietly without making ebullition, we have simmering; at this point the thermometer should register 180° Fahr. It is at this temperature that we cook meat and fish and make soups. When the bubbles form rapidly on the sides and come to the top of the water, and there is motion in the water, still it has not really reached the boiling-point; it is giving off the atmospheric gases which have been absorbed within it. Only when the thermometer reaches 212° does water really boil, and it is then in rapid motion, continuing to give off atmospheric gases with the steam it makes. Exactly when it ceases to give off these gases it were difficult to say, but, generally speaking, after water has boiled rapidly for about ten minutes it is freed from all gas and rendered tasteless—quite unfit for the making of tea or coffee. Boiled water is flat, too flat for

drinking purposes ; but water that has been boiled to render it germ free, in doubtful localities, may be re-aerated by allowing it to drop slowly through a filter from one vessel into another at a considerable distance apart, the upper one much above the lower one. In this way we may regain some of its original flavour.

In parenthesis, I may say here that in speaking of boiled meats and fish, boiled eggs, or boiled vegetables, none of these are really meant to be boiled at 212° ; although plunged into water at that temperature, they are afterwards never allowed to rise beyond 180°—by any one who knows what the principles of cookery mean. They require a little longer time to cook than if kept at the galloping point, but the cook who can believe anything is really cooking when it is only simmering will be rewarded by finding the fibres made tender and the flavours retained.

I have before me the *dicta* of a French Cordon Bleu as to the making of coffee. He says there are three essentials to bear in mind before good coffee can be looked for—a good bean, a bean well roasted, and its infusion in the right manner. First as to the bean. Mocha has a reputation, but its aroma is peculiar ; it needs the cultivated taste to enjoy it pure. The best is a mixture of one-third Mocha, one-third Martinique, and

one-third San Domingo. The roasting is very important. You may have the most elaborate of roasting-machines, yet be equally well served with an iron frying-pan of a kind that you might use for an omelet, only it must be rigidly kept for the coffee and for no other purpose. Butter the pan very slightly, put in the beans, and place it at first over gentle heat, allowing the beans a chance to heat through gradually, and to *cook* through as well as colour. Increase the heat by degrees, and shake the pan well. When they have acquired a rich brown colour the beans are sufficiently roasted. Any burnt ones must be picked out, as they will spoil the flavour. It requires about three-quarters of an hour to roast coffee properly. Turn the beans from the pan on to a clean linen cloth, and let them become quite cold before shutting away in a hermetically sealed box or tin. It is best to roast but a sufficiency for two or three days at a time, as the aroma so quickly vanishes.

So many kinds of infusers and machines for coffee-making have been invented that to single out any particular one is difficult, but the principle of slow filtration is generally the same in all, and you get this almost as well in the ordinary block-tin *cafetière* as in the most elaborate contrivance; but the "Excelsior," of which I give an illustration, is one of the most simple, yet perfect makes

known. It extracts all the goodness, because the water is constantly passing through the coffee. Of nicely roasted, fresh-milled coffee you will need to take a heaping teaspoonful to each person, rather more if you are making for one person

THE EXCELSIOR CAFETIERE.

only. Let the water be absolutely boiling if using a cafetière, and pour it over by small cupfuls at a time, letting it percolate slowly into the receiving-pot below. Keep very hot, but do not let coffee boil again after it is made. Having every part of the apparatus *hot*, and keeping it so, is the secret

of good coffee ; in cold vessels, which chill it at the beginning, you cannot hope to achieve a good result. You cannot make coffee long in advance, that is, ordinary *café à l'eau*, but coffee essence you may keep for several days in stoppered bottles.

My French authority, from whom I am quoting, says that it is a great mistake to take for *café au lait* the same infusion you have brewed for drinking *noir*. "It is not a simple infusion like this that you need for drinking *au lait*. It is essence of coffee you must take, and make up your diffusion with boiling milk!" There is no need even to reheat the coffee itself at all; the boiling of the milk is sufficient. Now this is surely a point to bear in mind by the would-be-famed coffee-maker, for she may go on brewing coffee and water, and boiling milk to change its colour and flavour, and fail all the time of realising a good result. The milk, he says, must be very good in quality, not watered down, and never boiled in any other pan than one kept expressly for milk. And as to the essence, this is the manner of its preparation: You may make it with cold water, if you prefer, rather than boiling, and the result will be equally as good. Take about twice the ordinary quantity of freshly ground coffee and a quarter of its amount of chicory (chicory is an improvement to coffee essence), and pass but

one or two cupfuls of water through it, by very small quantities at a time, and for several times, until all the goodness seems to have been extracted. Then bottle and cork well. No need, as we have just said, to reheat the coffee, but allow one teaspoonful of essence to each large cupful, and fill up with boiling milk.

There are plenty of coffee essences to be bought ready-made? There are, but don't buy them; make for yourself.

Then as to tea. The mere pouring of boiling water on the tea in the pot does not make tea, as we all know. Tea must infuse the right amount of time, and then the infuser must be withdrawn from the pot if the second cup is not to be of different flavour. There is a capital little infuser (the "Mikado"), which can be drawn up by the little chain attached to it, and kept out of the water once it has given off its strength; this prevents the extraction of tannin: and, while tea itself is a wholesome stimulant, almost indispensable to our comfort in this life, tannin is an enemy. Tea is often barred out in a strictly regulated diet, whereas it is the tannin that needs to be withdrawn; the tea alone need never be feared. Some tea-pots have a china infuser fitted below the lid, working on a principle to the same effect as the "Mikado" does, but those who do not

possess a tea-pot of this order should buy a separate infuser of metal, and use it in the ordinary urn or pot. The comfort of always having your tea of the right strength, free from stray leaves and stalk, is great; the benefit of having it free from harmful matter is greater still.

A heated tea-pot, water at the right point of boiling, and a good blend of tea, brewing just the right number of minutes and no more, then keeping hot without the leaves—with these precautions you can scarcely fail to have a good cup, whether you adulterate it with milk and sugar, or drink it pure.

The new "extending" table-heater is a most ornamental addition to the table, being fashioned

Polished Brass Stand, Polished Copper Top and Lamps.

in burnished copper. It may be had with one spirit-lamp or two; and its flat, extending top will not only keep coffee-pot and milk-jugs hot, but a tea-kettle, and breakfast dishes.

XIII

HOW TO SERVE A DINNER WITHOUT A MAID

A DINNER of several courses, a party of guests, and no maid! Surely no one would dream of attempting such a thing? But if the party is arranged, the dinner thought out, and only the maid is lacking, why be defeated on that score? The guest is surely not worth entertaining who would think less well of a hostess who waited upon him or her with her own hands, especially if knowing for a certainty that she has been her own cook in the first instance. When all is said and done, it is a question of management, of being superior to circumstances, of being equal to the occasion—in fact, of generalship. And who will dare to discount good generalship?

The absence of a maid does not necessarily imply that no help whatever can be had. A friendly "char," or a house-boy, or some small

girl not yet risen to the rank of maid, can always be got, unless you live in the backwoods, where dinner-parties are unusual. Many reasons combine to make it desirable that this friendly helper should remain invisible, but invisibility is no hindrance to effective help. Even where you have a skilled maid and hired waiters, you would find it needful to have the invisible helper as well, so we take her as a foregone conclusion.

Obviously, the first essential in considering a menu for the dinner you are going to serve yourself is to take care that every part of it can be prepared beforehand, so that there may be no need for you to retire to the kitchen, or ask your guests to wait for the next item. And not only must it be possible to prepare everything, but you must reduce, as far as possible, the changing of plates, the number required, and the number of necessary "accompaniments" which certain dishes call for.

Whatever you aim at achieving, forget not that simplicity is ever the best of graces. In your own sphere set a fashion for simpler living, and thereby be a benefactor. Display invariably shows a want of education somewhere, even when it is an artistic display.

Happily the day is now gone by when loading of the table was regarded as necessary for the

rich, when much plate or silver, much glass, several sets of knives and forks, elaborate decorations and floral devices, numerous wines, and a variety of viands, were an essential part of entertainment. The tables of the wealthy to-day show an almost ascetic severity in comparison to what was seen upon them a few years back, and if they find a better grace from the change, how much more graceful must it be for the smaller household, especially that smallest household of all, the flat of modest dimensions.

It is a very modest table we have in mind this time; in fact, it is a round table set for a party of six: there is so much sociability connected with a round table! There is no "table-centre," for these excrescences having reached their uttermost limit of cheap absurdity, have quite gone out of fashion. But there is a very good damask cloth on the board. It may have been a wedding gift to the hostess, or it may not, but, being a good cook and housekeeper, she is also one who takes pride in fine linen, and there is no occasion to cover up fine glossy damask with much decoration. There are a few single blooms, choice and delicate, set in tall slender tubes of varying height; these are chiefly grouped together near the centre, but not sufficiently close to form a block. Some feathery green depends far enough

from one or two of the glasses to make a little trail here and there, in no set pattern. Two drinking glasses stand at each place, one for wine, one for water ; a large and small knife, large and small fork, and one spoon are placed there also, side by side, not across the top as aforetime. A dainty serviette, simply folded, and dinner roll, complete the necessary furnishings, in which we include one or two tiny cruet sets or salt-cellars. Some little china leaf dishes or crystal bonbon trays may be added, if you think well. To nibble at salted almonds or eat a sweatmeat is sometimes a useful way of filling a pause in the conversation ; but don't have too many,—either sweetmeats or pauses.

The room will, of course, have in it a side-board or side-table of some sort ; this it will be necessary to furnish with a supply of extra knives, forks, and spoons, plates and glasses, with water-carafe, wines, soda or mineral waters, and what-ever else you seem likely to need. On this, also, you will place the butter, biscuits, and cheese for the last course, the coffee-cups, the salad and its mixed dressing ; and from here you will serve the soup for the first course. Round the door there should be a four-fold screen, so that you can slip between sideboard and door to set soiled plates on another table placed outside the door, and

receive hot dishes there from the invisible one, who has brought them up from the kitchen. What goes on behind that screen is no concern of the people seated the other side of it. It is your affair if you drop anything, if you make unnecessary noise, or have to speak to the invisible deity; but you can be trusted to manage all that.

To avoid all confusion in the kitchen, you will have arranged with the same care all the plates that will be wanted in their proper order, ready for heating, the dishes also, the silver coffee-pot, if the coffee is made there, and given minute directions, about such dishing-up as may have been left to be done.

When the guests are seated at table, the hostess will remove the cover from the soup-tureen, and, serving from the sideboard, will hand the plates to the guest nearest to her, who passes them round the table. At each place there will already be one plate; this is intended for the fish, and will be quite sufficiently warmed by having had the hot soup-plate standing upon it for a few minutes. When the soup has to be removed, the guests will each pass their plates along as before, and these, being quietly and quickly piled together, are speedily carried to the table outside, the tureen also, and the dish of fish

brought in. It is better to collect fish and meat plates by going round the table and taking two at a time. Possibly some gentleman will feel sufficiently at home to do this ; if not, the hostess can manage it gracefully, carrying on her talk as a matter of course. The whole art of passing things off successfully will lie in the ease with which she takes everything as a matter of course—self-forgetful, but forgetting nothing else. So long as she has not to leave the room altogether she need not mind getting up from her place.

And now for the menu for this occasion :—

Consommé.
Fried smelts ; brown bread and butter, cucumber.
Fillets of beef *en casserole.* Browned potatoes.
Ham, aspic jelly. Lettuce salad.
Gateau, or layer cake, fruit jelly.
Cheese and biscuits.
Coffee.

Consommé is safe to suit every taste ; moreover, you can buy so many excellent makes, in tubes or in glass bottles, that it is hardly worth while taking the trouble of making it at home. I do not, however, advocate taking *any* tinned soups in preference to the home-made. Follow the directions, and add a little more water to the tube or bottle you select, as usually these are rather strong extracts. You may, to give body and

variety to the soup, boil some Italian paste or vermicelli, and add it to the tureen, but it must be broken small enough not to be stringy.

Allow three or four smelts for each person, and, after wiping, dip them in egg and bread-crumbs, frying in boiling fat, then drain and keep hot in covered dish. Garnish with lemon, and have plates of thin brown bread and butter already on the table, with a dish of cucumber in cubes, and spoon to serve this.

Rump steak should be selected for the fillets, and cut into pieces of even size, not more than two inches square. Roll each in flour, and brown quickly all over in fat; then place in the casserole, with two or three very small peeled onions, some mushrooms, bunch of sweet herbs, pepper and salt, sufficient clear stock to just cover. Let it cook gently for an hour and a half or more; then remove the herbs and stir in a wineglassful of red wine and spoonful of cornflour previously wetted; bring up to boiling-point, and let simmer until wanted. It is unlikely to take any harm for an hour or more. Before dinner the cover of the casserole should be removed, and a good quantity of cooked potatoes, new by preference and browned in butter, should be piled on the top. A serviette is folded neatly round the dish before it is carried on to the sideboard, to be

helped from there on to hot plates. Of course, if desired, a chicken or fowl might be cooked the same way in place of beef, if it sounds better and seems better, but, failing the means to procure a chicken, beef is not a bad substitute.

When this dish is disposed of, the ham, aspic jelly, and lettuce salad are brought on to the sideboard, straight from the cool cellar or refrigerator; the prepared dressing is poured over the latter and tossed for a few seconds, and the bowl is passed round the table, salad plates having been distributed first.

After this there is probably a change of wine-glasses, or an iced drink can be brought in. Then all plates are carried away and fancy ones take their place for the gateau—which, by the way, was bought ready-made at a confectioner's, being the cheapest and surest proceeding, and there is a bright fruit jelly to be considered. At this stage the dinner loses any formality it has had, and time is taken to enjoy delicately the pretty sweet, and, when this is returned to the sideboard, the cheese and butter are brought back almost unnoticed.

When the time comes for partaking of coffee, however, the hostess will quietly excuse herself, and slip out to see that it is rightly finished, and poured off into a hot pot, for there are certain

points about coffee-making which it is not well to trust to the most reliable of "chars."

The cups and saucers, with cream and sugar, if not able to be accommodated on the sideboard, should have a tray or table in another corner of the room, so that when bringing in the coffee the hostess has but to walk over and fill them, trusting to some cavalier to hand them round.

It may, of course, be thought better to have these served in the drawing-room later on, and, if so, a finger-bowl set on plate with small doyley would be the last thing to hand round at the table, some crystallised fruit or other dessert being placed thereon at same time.

When the guests adjourn and have settled to books and music, the hostess can generally manage to slip back and arrange that all food is put away safely ; the silver and knives into pitchers of water, if not able to be washed at once ; and otherwise see that all is going right behind the scenes. If her helper is under contract to stay and finish washing-up properly, the food should be all that need be considered by the mistress. The table itself can generally be left until the guests have departed, unless the dining-room is turned into a smoke-room, when it will be better to take off the cloth, leaving only the polished board and flowers.

In looking over the menu here given, it will be seen that there is nothing which could not have been prepared and cooked in the morning. To have a joint of meat and choice of vegetables obviously entails much more labour, and necessitates going back and forth between kitchen and dining-room, as it is forced to go on cooking until almost the last moment. Moreover, it is more difficult to carve a joint at a sideboard, and, if it is done at table, it frequently calls for more skill than any one but the hostess herself possesses. Chickens, again, if left whole, are equally as difficult to manage, and entail many things in the way of accompaniment. What is easily compassed in a private way is quite otherwise when you want to carry on a conversation and keep cool-headed whilst serving a number. Hence, it will be seen that the selection of something in the nature of a ragoût or braise, a stew or curry, is far more suitable. But there is choice enough and to spare in this range only.

Puddings, fruit dishes, and fancy sweets are always more acceptable served cold rather than warm, at the end of a dinner of several courses, and this again facilitates matters for the entertainer. One nice dish, rather than two inferior ones, is ever the best taste.

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