

THE HOUSEHOLD.

ON THE COOKING OF VEGETABLES.

In a country so richly supplied with vegetables as our own, there ought to be no lack of knowledge as to the cooking of them, but, as a matter-of-fact, even in houses where all the other cooking is excellent, the vegetables are often spoiled. So general is the failure to cook them well, that comparatively few people know what the more delicate vegetables are like in perfection. The reason for this is, that they are more easily spoiled, perhaps, than anything else, except eggs. Five minutes too long boiling impairs the flavor and delicacy of peas, asparagus, cauliflower and other vegetables.

Yet, as a rule, all vegetables, potatoes excepted, are given not five minutes too much boiling, but hours too much. I have known many cooks to put the roast in the oven, and the cauliflower or asparagus in the pot at the same time. If the vegetable is one that falls to pieces when overdone, and if the cook is careful enough and interested enough in her work to see that that does not occur, she draws the pot back, and leaves them to soak in the hot water. But it rarely occurs to any one to think what those water-soaked vegetables might have been, had they had fair play.

In every kitchen there should be a time-table for vegetables, and unless under exceptional circumstances, the meat must be the standard; that is to say, you time the meat, and reckon the time to cook vegetables by that. For instance, your meat will be done at one o'clock, you have, therefore, to consult the time-table or your memory, as to the exact time each vegetable takes, and put it on according to that time. The following time-table may be depended upon, if the rules given be observed faithfully.

Potatoes take about half an hour, unless small and new, then they take rather less.

Peas and asparagus, twenty to twenty-five minutes.

Cabbage and cauliflower, twenty-five minutes to half an hour.

String beans, if slit or sliced thin slantwise, twenty-five minutes. If only snapped across forty minutes.

Green corn, twenty to twenty-five minutes.

Turnips, if cut small, forty-five minutes.

Carrots, cut in four lengthwise, one hour, unless very large, when they may take an hour and a half.

Young summer turnips and carrots, forty-five minutes to one hour.

Beets, one hour in summer, and two to four hours in winter.

Spinach, twenty minutes.

Onions, medium size, one hour.

It will be seen that the time given is very much shorter than that generally allowed, and in the case of cabbage and cauliflower, I have found it almost impossible to make many housekeepers even try to cook them in the time named.

Suppose you have a roast to be done by one o'clock, and have young beets and carrots to cook, you would put the beets on in boiling water, salted, at twelve, the carrots a quarter of an hour later.

If you have, instead, peas or asparagus, you would have the water boiling at twenty-five minutes to one, the potatoes should go on five minutes earlier, that is, at half past twelve. Cabbage and cauliflower would also go on five minutes later than the potatoes, that is to say, at twenty-five minutes to one.

It must be remembered, that the rule in cooking vegetables is to put them in plenty of fast-boiling water, having first drained them well, in order that as little cold water as possible may go with them to check the boiling; and they must be put on the very hottest part of the range, so that the vegetables may not be left longer than necessary in the water before boiling. Moreover, attention must be paid to see that the boiling continues the whole time. Vegetables irregularly boiled, put forward and backward, as it suits convenience for other cooking, will always be discolored, sodden and tasteless.

Certain vegetables, such as cabbage, cauliflower, beet-tops or anything with green leaves, should have a large saucepan and plenty of water, as much baking soda as will lie on a dime, and about a tablespoonful of salt to half a gallon of water,

and they should boil rapidly. String beans also require the same treatment.

Green peas and asparagus need to boil gently. Potatoes also, because, when boiled fast, if they are of a mealy kind, they will break before they are done in the middle.

To sum up. Boil string beans, cabbage, and all green vegetables, with the exception of peas and asparagus, as rapidly as possible, in plenty of water with salt and a little soda.

Boil all other vegetables gently but continuously their specified time, in salted water without soda.

When boiled, treat the vegetables in the following way:

Potatoes, pour the water off as soon as they are tender, do not let them break, then gently shake the saucepan back and forth, and put it for two or three minutes, half covered, where they will steam dry, or lay a clean, folded cloth over them.

Peas and string beans should have the water poured from them, and a piece of butter with a scant teaspoonful of flour mashed into it, stirred with them, and two or three tablespoonfuls of milk, according to quantity of vegetables, added; stir round till the dressing simmers, then serve. If cream is abundant, it may take the place of this dressing. Add a little pepper and salt, and serve.

Cabbage and spinach should be pressed dry, chopped and dressed in the same way. Carrots and turnips, if cut small, boiled and served with this milk and butter dressing, are delicious.

Cauliflower and asparagus should be carefully drained, not to break them—the best way is through a colander—a slice of toast should be laid in the dish, the vegetables laid on it carefully, and white sauce made in the following way, poured over them.

White sauce. Melt in a saucepan one tablespoonful of butter, add a tablespoonful of flour, slice them and let both bubble together a few seconds, then add quickly half a pint of boiling milk, stirring all the time; this will now be a smooth cream, just thick enough to lay on the vegetables, but not thick enough to form a paste. If it does this, the tablespoonful of flour has been over-full; a heaping one is not intended, but one just rounded. Season with half a salt-spoonful of salt, and very little pepper.

Young summer squashes, gathered when about the size of an orange, and boiled without peeling half an hour, then pressed between two plates, and served with this sauce, or with butter, pepper and salt, are delicious.

In hotels where many vegetables have to be boiled, and the range required for other things, a good cook manages thus: when the vegetables, potatoes excepted, are done, they are drained and laid at once in cold water. This preserves the color and flavor; when required they are made hot in the dressing. Never attempt to keep vegetables hot in the saucepan, it is far better to remove them, and make them hot again, if for any reason you have them cooked too soon.

The bad odor from cabbage and cauliflower is quite unnecessary, and comes from slow boiling in too little water; there will be only a pleasant smell if cooked quickly, as I have directed.—*Youth's Companion*.

HOW BELLE STARTED OUT.

BY LOUISE MOORE.

"I declare, Nettie, I am sick and tired of walking around in other people's cast off clothing. Just look at me! a perfect contribution-box. My hat last season graced Aunt Kate's stylish head, my wrap was part of cousin Margaret's wardrobe. These horrid shoes were a misfit, and because our squeamish second cousin Arabella, who has expectations, didn't think her foot looked pretty in them, they were donated to 'poor cousin Belle,' and though they cramp my good sized feet, still I must wear them. This dress, and as you may well know, all our dresses were once somebody else's. I never have a new pair of gloves, nor a fresh ribbon. I declare it would be positively refreshing to have something brand-span new, selected by myself, according to my own taste. I tell you, Nettie Levering, I intend to strike out and earn my own living," said Belle, impetuously.

"But, Belle, I shrink so from people knowing papa cannot support us; it would be so mortifying to him. It is so much

more genteel for our friends to think we are not obliged to earn our own living, even if we are worried nearly to death to keep up appearances," replied Nettie.

"That is all nonsense, Nettie," said Belle; "false pride is at the bottom of your desire to shield papa. He does the best he can, that we all know, and I can swallow my pride far better than I can my independence. I can do something as well as other girls. I can neither paint, draw, nor give music-lessons, but I do excel in bread and pastry-making. Only yesterday I heard Mrs. Lewis, the President of the Ladies' Industrial Exchange, tell a lady they had more orders for good bread and fine pastry than they could supply, and the idea suggested itself to me, why not ask Mrs. Davis, one of the Managers of the Exchange, to allow me to become a contributor to that department of the business, and thus turn my domestic talents to account, as hundreds of others have done."

And so Belle did, and now she dresses in brand-span new clothes—dresses well, too—besides throwing in the family treasury, many dollars; and somehow her rich relatives who used to send their cast-off finery to "poor cousin Belle," have more respect for the girl who would rather swallow her pride than her independence.—*Christian at Work*.

HINTS TO HOUSEKEEPERS.

Use common salt when sweeping carpets, and it will brighten the colors wonderfully.

To take out iron-mold stains, wet with milk and cover with salt. The latter also rubs egg stains from spoons.

An excellent way to clean old brass is to use ordinary household ammonia, undiluted, and rub with a brush. This will leave the metal clear and bright. It should then be rinsed in clear water and wiped dry.

If your sewing-machine runs hard and your oiler is empty, try as a substitute equal parts of clean lard and kerosene oil.

To remove coffee stains, put thick glycerine on the wrong side of the article and wash out in lukewarm water.

Clean white marble stoops, halls or walks by having them washed with a mop which has been dipped in boiling hot water and soda. Use a good deal of soda and allow it to dissolve. It is very effective.

Cabbage leaves deprived of their coarse nerves (ribs) make an excellent dressing for wounds of various kinds and obstinate ulcers. Apply night and morning with a bandage over them.

If there be much sickness about the neighborhood boil the water which is used in babies' food, for boiling kills all the animalculæ contained in the water. Cool it before using.

To clean bottles, put into them some kernels of corn and a tablespoonful of ashes, half fill them with water, and after a vigorous shaking and rinsing you will find the bottles as good as new.—*American Cultivator*.

TO WASH ALL WOOL FABRICS.

The best way to wash all-wool fabrics, or those that have a fair mixture of wool in them, is to make a hot suds of good soap, in which put a tablespoonful or two of ammonia. If possible to make clean without, do not rub soap on the fabrics, as it fills them up badly. Rub the clothes in this, and rinse in clear hot water. Hang them up to dry out of doors when the weather is suitable, but never in stormy or freezing weather. Stretch them to shape when hung up, and if possible iron them while they are yet damp. Never use soap in the rinsing water, but see to it that the soap used in rubbing them is well rinsed out. Flannels washed in this manner will be soft and pliable, even unto old age, but they should never be trusted to the care of servants entirely.—*Good House-keeping*.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR EYES.

In families where there is much sewing to be done, it is a good plan to have the bulk of work on dark and colored goods done by daylight, preserving the white sewing for the evening, in order to save the eyes. Like the other bodily organs, they will retain their power much longer if properly treated. John Quincy Adams never used glasses even in extreme old age, and he attributed his remarkable eyesight to the habit of gently manipulating the

eyelids with the fingers, rubbing toward the nose. This may be only a partial explanation of the strength of his visual organs, but that sort of friction is undoubtedly excellent. Reading at twilight, or lying down, or by a poor artificial light, or on an empty stomach, ought always to be avoided. The use of veils also, particularly the spotted lace variety now so commonly worn by women, cannot too strongly be condemned. Permanent injury to the eyesight has often resulted from wearing them, as well as heavy crape veils. Occasionally, on a very windy day or for a person in very delicate health, a thin veil may serve a good purpose, but as a rule they are pernicious.—*Selected*.

A SAND BAG.

One of the most convenient articles for use in illness is a sand bag. It is even better than the hot water rubber bag, since it retains the heat longer, and is more easily adjusted to different parts of the body. It should be made of flannel, about eight inches square. After being filled with sand, and the opening carefully sewed up, it should be inclosed in another bag of cotton or linen. It can then be heated by placing in the oven, or even on top of the stove, if not too hot. It is a good plan to keep two or three of these bags on hand that a fresh one may be warming as the first begins to lose its heat. Another nearly indispensable article in the sick room is a screen, or a curtain hung across the door, not only to guard against drafts, but to shut out the sight of persons passing and repassing in the hall. For moistening dry lips a little gum-arabic, or glycerine, in water is excellent, and for the thirst a small lump of ice dissolved in the mouth is much better than drinking cold water. It is upon the little matters that the comfort of an invalid largely depends.—*Selected*.

PUZZLES—NO. 10.

ANAGRAMMATICAL CHARADE.

The couplets rhyme. The omitted words are all formed from the four words omitted in the fourteenth line.

'Tis May-day in London! Hurrah! and hurrah! And here come the chimney-sweeps. Look there! * * *!

One, two, three, four, five,—in their dresses so queer; And with them a lassie in glittering * * *.

All covered with spangles on dress and on * * * How can she be willing such garments to wear?

They pause here and there, where'er it may * * * And to drum-and-fife music they one and all dance.

And with them another,—a figure so queer; At the sight of his dancing the crowds raise a * * *.

'Tis a frame trimmed with herbs and flowers quite * * * At its top waves a flag 'gainst the grey London sky.

One dances within, though he cannot be seen. The name which he goes by is, * * *.

But lest you can't guess it,—my first, I will say, Will draw off high boots. Just try it, I pray.

My second, the last letter doubled, would be An old-time hotel. My third is just * * *.

My fourth in the country is everywhere seen, 'Tis the clothing of spring and of summer,—fair * * *.

ANAGRAMS.

May birthdays.—Noted persons born in May. Lewellyn Errington Dori Howells, May 1, 1769. Carl Pildowe Smith, May 4, 1796. Jas. D. S. Parker, May 10, 1789. Warren H. D. Craig, May 22, 1813. Edgar Hart Wintrich, May 23, 1822. Donna France Violet Gigue, May 24, 1819. Sherman Powell Dore, May 25, 1803. Laura J. Wheidow, May 27, 1819.

RIDDLE.

Once in a minute, twice in a moment, and not once in thousand years?

WHAT IS IT?

Enough for one, too much for two, and nothing at all for three?

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.—NUMBER 9.

WHAT AM I?—Echo. HIDDEN MOUNTAINS.—1. Andes. 2. Atlas. 3. Everest. 4. Brown. 5. Mendip. 6. Etna. 7. Corno. 8. Agua. 9. Franklin. 10. Hecla. ENIGMA.—Seek good and not evil. Amos 5, 14. SQUARE WORD.—

V A I N
A C R E
I R I S
N E S T

PUZZLERS HEARD FROM.

The following have sent correct answers: Hannah E. Greene, W. McCaughrin, H. E. Valentino.