



Published for the Department of Agriculture for the Province of Quebec, (official part) by
EUSEBE SENECAI & FILS, 20, St. Vincent St Montreal.

Vol. VIII. No. 3.

MONTREAL, MARCH 1886.

\$1.00 per annum, in advance.

OFFICIAL PART.

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SOREL, JAN. 29TH.

DE OMNIBUS REBUS.

We had a short talk the other day about carp and trout. We found that in ponds in a clayey soil the former of these was the more profitable fish of the two, the latter not thriving except where cold springs were available. Where carp thrive, eels will thrive too; and as a food this singular fish will be found, if properly cooked, far superior to the carp. The idea entertained by many, that eels are unwholesome is not founded on fact: beef becomes unwholesome if you eat too much of it. No one proposes that a meal should be composed entirely of eels, we should soon get tired of veal if we were to eat nothing else, and even the salmon would pall upon the palate, were we to dine off it alone.

Now, like all rich food, eels require to be eaten with a slightly acid sauce: vinegar or lemon-juice should always be present, and mustard not entirely absent. In my kitchen, which, though on a very tiny scale, is, I flatter myself, hard to beat, three ways of cooking the eel are practised: they are broiled, stewed, or fried. When eels are broiled, they should not be skinned, which saves a good deal of trouble, and preserves the flavour admirably.

A sharp fire is requisite for this as for every other sort of

broiling; the plates and dish should be hot; and the sauce scalding. Cut the eel in pieces about four inches long; pepper and salt them to taste, and turn them frequently until done. My broiling is always done on a coal-oil stove. The one in use was bought of Mr Fred. Cole, Notre-Dame Street, Montreal, in the year 1876, and is now as good as new. In places where gas cannot be had, this implement will be found of the greatest utility; it broils and stews better, even, than charcoal.

Eels, if you fry them, must be skinned, egged and bread-crumbed, and plunged into very hot fat, lard, or oil. Smearing a pan with butter and "saut-ing" the fish is by no means the same thing. A handful of dried parsley and savory, with a very little thyme, mixed with the bread-crumbs, will be found a most appetising addition.

Stewing, however, is my favourite way of preparing the eel, and is thus carried out: skin, and slightly boil the eel in plain water to extract the fat; have ready a strong broth—what the French call *consomme*—made of beef-bones, to which add half a dozen cloves, a large onion, a clove of garlic—if the feminine part of your family will allow it; mine won't, I regret to say—a tiny shred of lemon-peel, not a particle of nutmeg, but two tomatoes, a small bunch of sweet herbs, and a table-spoonful of capers added towards the end of the operation, will be found to suit most palates. In this the eel is to be slowly stewed for about an hour; the sauce is simply the vehicle in which the eel is cooked with a good squeeze of lemon juice stirred in just before the eel is dished. Don't eat too much of it.

Having cooked our fish, we will now see how to grow and catch it. Eels like mud to *nuzzle* in, but the clearer and the more charged with lime the water is, the finer the the flavour of the fish. The river Test, in Hampshire, England, which flows out of the chalk hills, affords the finest flavoured eels in the world—superior, even, to those of the far-famed Lake Thrasymene.—Still, even in ponds eels do well, and, in my opinion, are well worth all the trouble they cost, which, after all, is very trifling.

Having secured a pond, natural or artificial, and all the