

## Domestic Economy.



### RHUBARB, AND WHAT MAY BE DONE WITH IT.

"I'll tell you a secret about rhubarb. You must allow that it is very wholesome. Well, then, understand that rhubarb takes all flavors, but gives none, and, therefore, helps to make up a deficiency of more costly material. For instance, if you desire to make a large tart and have only half a pint of raspberries to make it with, how would you manage it? Raspberries are expensive to buy, and go no-way."

"Ah, well, I cannot tell. I must go without it, I suppose."

"Not so; you have only to mince the rhubarb very small, wash it well before, and particularly after mincing; stir up the sugar with it, and bake it till soft; then, when cold, stir in your raspberries, make your tart, and bake it only sufficiently long to cook the paste. The raspberries are sure to be dressed enough. My aunt used to say there were many contrivances which expensive cooks made their employers pay for, but never had. Many things can be made from rhubarb of which an inexperienced person would never dream."

"From rhubarb you may make what would be taken for 'preserved ginger,' a simple, inexpensive, and pleasant addition to the dessert,

"You may boil rhubarb and black-currents together till you have extracted the juice from both; then strain it through two sieves of a different fineness; then boil it with its weight in sugar, and you have black-currant jelly. Flavor the simple juice of rhubarb with lemon-peel and stick cinnamon, and you have quince jelly. Flavor it slightly with lemon and almond flavorings, and you have apple-jelly."

"Boil the simple juice with sugar only, and a small portion of treacle, till it is dark and thick, and you have the best coloring imaginable for gravies and soups."

"Again, boil the juice with an equal quantity of loaf-sugar and some red-currents; strain it, and when boiling drop in singly some ripe strawberries, and a more delicious addition to dessert in winter can-

not be put on the table. In fact, the capabilities of rhubarb are so various that they can scarcely be enumerated.

"There are a few things you must observe; an important one is, for mixing with any fruit, the juice must be first extracted by boiling without sugar, and then be strained. This is now the basis or foundation upon which to build other flavors, other deceptions, for the admixture is no less; but, unlike most others, the deceit is incapable of being discovered."

"But how can you make artificial ginger?" I asked; "for prepared ginger is a weakness of mine."

"Milly, you had better write down the instructions I give you, they may be of use to you some day. My aunt collected them with great care, and I think I have somewhat improved upon them, because I purpose giving you the reasons why such and such directions are to be observed; and this information my own experience has taught me."

"Well, then, about the ginger?"

"Boil down a sufficient quantity of rhubarb till the juice is tolerably clear, and the rhubarb is separated into fibre; then strain it through a flannel bag, pointed at one end as jelly-bags usually are. I have found it better for the purpose to make a little Berlin canvas bag, pointed at one end like a funnel, then a few inches below this hang the jelly-bag; the canvas facilitates the running through. While this process is going on, or at the commencement of the work, put in a *caper bottle* (because it has a wide mouth and is ready to hand) two ounces of raw ginger cut into thin slices; fill up the bottle with common spirits of wine: let it macerate till it is of tolerable strength. This is ginger extract. Weigh the juice of the rhubarb, or measure it in a half-pint glass; to every pound of juice put a pound of loaf-sugar; let it boil till it is like a thick syrup, but very clear; if it be thick, strain it through coarse muslin, or a sieve. Let the syrup boil, then have ready some pieces of fresh rhubarb a half-finger in length; when the syrup is boiling drop in the rhubarb piece by piece, let it boil till