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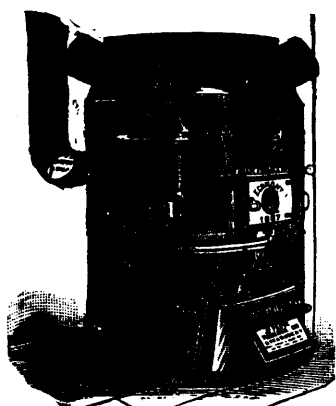
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First, the meat to be used and the bones, must be placed in cold water. The meat should be cut into pieces of moderate size, and the bones should be broken. The bones are used with the object of adding the flavour of the marrow to the soup; the fat yielded by this element is to be skimmed off later. As all fat must be taken from the soup in the process of making, there being no severer condemnation of the dish than to pronounce it "greasy," only lean meat should be used. Heat the whole slowly, to draw out the albumen before it coagulates. Part of the albumen is combined with the other extracted elements; the rest floating on the top in the form of a film, must be skimmed off when the water has reached boiling point. Then add the vegetables and the spices needed to flavour the soup, and let all cook gently, simmering but not boiling, for several hours. When the vegetables are done they should be taken out, for what the soup wants is the flavour of these, and not any part of their dissolved substance.

Soups may be divided into four classes or kinds, as follows: Clear soups, thick soups, purees or bisques, and chowders. Clear soups include all modifications of the bouillon or broth. Thick soups have for their foundation the consomme, or rich broth, which is usually the bouillon reduced by boiling—whence the name, signifying perfected or improved—and with a thickening ingredient added. Consomme is a very rich and nourishing dish, and is to old men, says Prof. Blot, what milk is to babes. It may be said generally that a cook who can make a good consomme can make any kind of soup.

A puree is made by cooking the vegetable ingredients of the soup soft, and rubbing them through a sieve. A bisque is simply a puree of fish. Chowders are quite different from other soups, being compounds of any fish, flesh, fowl, or vegetables, in such proportion as may suit the ideas of the cook; the compound when complete should be thick, highly seasoned and palatable; but the ingredients should not be cooked to the consistency of the puree.

Bouillabaise, the famous French dish, which so delighted the palate of the famous novelist Thackeray that he composed a poem in its praise, is a chowder. We are told that there are no less than one hundred recipes known in France for making this famous dish, and as many ways of spelling its name.

In making soups of all kinds, the slow, even prolonged simmering, not boiling, must be observed as all-essential to the good result. The French say that the soup pot should only "smile," that is, it should never show any bubbles on the surface, but should cook slowly, at an even heat just below the boiling point. It is because our cooks and housewives cannot, or rather will not understand this rule that the soup of the average American household is such "a mere pretender to the name." It is not enough, as certain blunderers seem to fancy, to keep the constituents of the broth hot for several hours; it must cook incessantly, never stopping for even a moment's time. Furthermore, all the water needed for the soup should be put into it at the beginning: a serious loss of flavour is risked if more water has to be added during the process of cooking.

A good, clear soup should be of a fine brown colour. The use of the best of materials, and prolonged boiling, will insure this attractive colour; but should these be lacking, several ways may be tried to supply the deficient hue. Brown gravy from a roast may be added, but this, even when strained, is apt to impair the clearness of the broth. A better way is to use a little caramel or burned sugar, or a very excellent preparation, to be kept on hand for the purpose of colouring soups, may be made as follows: Take an earthen jar. Fill with alternate layers, first of moderate-sized onions, a clove stuck in each, then a layer of brown sugar, and a small piece of butter, and so on until the jar is filled. Put this into the oven in the evening, when the fire is going down, and leave it there over night. Repeat this for a number of successive nights till the onions have cooked down and a dark syrup is formed. Then put the jar aside and use its contents, a few drops at a time, to colour soups and gravies.

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