

well established house in New-York City, and the firm say that it is because the feathers are not properly cured (they have done all in their power to help me). If any one can aid me I shall be most grateful. K. B. R. [A similar inquiry was answered some years ago as follows: "Put the loose feathers into a tub of hot soap-suds and wash them thoroughly through several waters using no soap in the last, and ran through a clothes-wringer each day, then spread in a clean, dry room, and stir frequently until perfectly dry."]

**PURE PEACH JELLY**—The following method of making this jelly was discovered by accident. A certain good wife was too hurried one day while canning peaches to pare them. She wiped them with a damp cloth, halved them and dropped them into the boiling syrup. When the canning was done, there was a glassful of surplus juice which when cold, to the lady's surprise, was a firmer jelly than she had ever obtained before from this fruit. Now, when a plentiful peach year occurs, this lady makes this jelly by cutting up the peaches with their skins on, and boiling them to a pulp in water, then straining and treating like any other jelly. J. M. M. *Jacksonville, Ill.*

**CANNING ASPARAGUS.**—After reading of canned asparagus and seeing it sold in the stores, I thought I would try to do it. I have had good success so far. I cut the stalks in inch lengths, beginning at the bottom and leaving two inches in the head piece. I then cooked the same as for the table, only slightly salting it. After it has cooked 25 or 30 minutes I put it in Mason's jars the same as fruit. After the jars are sealed up, and placed on their heads until cold, I put them in the collar.

I have discovered that asparagus makes a good sweet pickle or salad, alone or with peas, either early peas shelled out, or young sugar peas in the pods. The asparagus and peas may be used in equal quantities, or if desired, more of one than the other, whichever is the most plentiful. I take 1 lb. of granulated sugar to a quart of vinegar, spice to taste, say 1 teaspoonful of cloves, 2 of cinnamon, 1 tablespoonful of aniseed, and 2 quarts of the cooked asparagus, after the water is all drained off. I put the spices in little sacks and drop in the vinegar and sugar to boil a minute or two, then add the cooked asparagus. When it has come to a boil I can it for use. E. S. A.

#### CLEANLINEES.

SOME men are born to power, and some to wealth, and some become leaders of thought, exponents of what is best in art and nature, and even of the lesser concerns of domestic life. Among the latter there is no greater authority than Mr. Ruskin, and we may therefore be excused for quoting his definition of what a true lady should be: "A princess, a washerwoman—yes, a washerwoman! to see that all is fair and clean, to wash with water, to cleanse and purify wherever she goes, to set disordered things in orderly array—this was a woman's mission."

A good many women of late have been finding their mission in making all clean and pure; for the spring

cleaning has been upon us, and much of the dirt and disorder accumulated through the winter has been brought to light, and consigned to the limbo of the dust-bin. So far well, but this intermittent cleanliness is not quite what our author means, neither is it what will keep our households—far less ourselves—in that state of thorough purity which it should be the ambition of every true woman to attain. For that Mr. Ruskin meant personal no less than domestic cleanliness is evidenced by the further statement—"I inherited to the full my mother's love of tidiness and cleanliness, and in Switzerland, next to the eternal snows, what I most admired was her white sleeves."

It is one thing to make clean; it is quite another matter, and even a more crucial test of capability, to keep clean; and where the former is, strictly speaking, an affair of the hands, the latter may be said to be a motion of the mind—that is, in the one case, the hands must carry out the designs of the head, but, having done so, a woman, by a mental effort, may avoid that slatternly way of going about her work that ends in a general muss all round. It is here, also, that practice and training come in. We are not all gifted by nature with the bumps of order and cleanliness. There are *trabs* among the classes, as well as among the masses, and when such a one is found in the drawing-room, it may pretty certainly be predicted there will be another to match in the kitchen. In a late interview with Mr. Buckmaster, of Kensington fame, he told the writer that on a certain occasion, being invited to breakfast by a lady of title living in Park Lane, she, with the assistance of a single domestic, cooked the whole meal for a party of fourteen in a little recess off the dining-room, and put it on the table in the finest order. Similarly, a certain instructress in a cookery class lately told her scholars that, given a gas-stove and a deal table, she could cook in any drawing-room without other sign of disorder or speck of what has been aptly called "matter misplaced." This is as it should be, and what every woman, be she servant or mistress, should aim at. To do so effectually the mind must be kept in check, and not allowed to stray away to something foreign to the matter on hand. Wandering thoughts make witless work; spilled water, spots of grease; dirty finger marks and dusty furniture all come from inattention to detail and want of that concentration of thought which will always be found to accompany a love of order and cleanliness.

A. L. O. S.

#### CHOICE DISHES OF VEGETABLES.—II.

If one is at a loss for inexpensive ways of raising the standard of living and making real improvement in the home table, few things will go so far at slight cost as putting more stress upon really choice dishes of vegetables. These are luxuries doubly prized by summer guests from the cities, because hardly possible in town, for tender vegetables, brought immediately from a good garden, are quite another thing from the results of oven good marketing.

With the full benefit of the abundant variety that we may have at midsummer, the list of choice dishes is a very long one. Many of these are

suitable for an elegant lunch or dinner, and are sometimes served singly as a separate course.

**STUFFED TOMATOES**—Served with the accompanying rich sauce, make a handsome entree; they are, however, equally good with roast veal or lamb, beef or chicken. Cut the stem end from eight or ten fine large tomatoes of perfect shape, and with a spoon remove most of the interior, leaving a firm shell. Drain the juice from the pulp and mix it with a cupful of finely minced cold meat, which may be veal or chicken, with a slight flavoring of ham or bacon. Add also a cupful of fine bread crumbs, a beaten egg, salt, cayenne and fine herbs to taste. Fill the shells with this mixture, crumb over, and bake for half an hour.

For the sauce, peel six or eight tomatoes, with a chopped onion and a bunch of sweet herbs or parsley, and stew gently until very thoroughly cooked. Strain, and thicken by stirring together butter and flour in a saucepan until it takes a gold color; the quantity used will depend upon the consistency of the sauce, which must be that of cream, thick enough to mask a spoon. A glass of sherry added is considered a great improvement.

The tomato may be cooked in so many ways that it is one of the most indispensable of vegetables. With roast beef, an excellent plan is to wash medium-sized tomatoes and cut out the stem end, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and bake in the pan with the meat.

**SCALLOPED TOMATOES.**—For this dish the tomatoes may be either whole or sliced, as preferred, first scalding and removing the skin. Arrange in a pudding-dish with alternate layers of bread crumbs, seasoning each layer with butter, salt and pepper, and a few mushrooms, or a dash of grated onion, parsley or other piquant flavoring may be added to taste. Cover with crumbs and liberal butter, and bake slowly for a full hour. Rice, boiled and well-drained, may be substituted for the bread crumbs.

**BAKED EGG PLANT.**—Egg-plant or summer squash may be varied from the usual mode by cooking somewhat similarly. Pare and cut in dice or slices and stew in salted water until tender. Drain thoroughly and season with plenty of butter and a pinch of parsley or sweet herbs if liked, or a mere suspicion of onion or garlic may be used. Crumb a baking-dish, first freely buttered; pour in the vegetable and cover with crumbs. Dot with butter and brown quickly in the oven.

**PURÉES.**—Peas or beans (preferably Limas) make a dainty dish when served in a thick purée of the consistency of soft mashed potato. Put through a colander or strainer when thoroughly tender, with enough of the water in which they were boiled to moisten, or a little cream may be added. Butter, salt and cayenne should be added to taste, and for beans a slice of ham may be boiled with them as well as a bayleaf and a slice or two of onion. Be sure to make very hot before serving. High and yet delicate seasoning is a requisite for dishes like this.

**FRITTERS.**—The frying kettle of deep (1) fat is one of the indispensables for a rich and varied use of vegetables in fine cooking. Dainty fritters of many kinds form a whole class of choice dishes. Corn is perhaps the most generally used, and corn fritters

(1) Oh! how different is an egg-and-bread-crumbed fish fried in deep fat to a fish sauté in a shallow pan covered with butter!—Ed.

belong to the remembered summer delights of childhood. To begin with, there is an art in shaving off the tops of the kernels in each row of the tender sweet corn and pressing out the contents with the back of the knife, so as to leave the skin of the kernel empty upon the cob. Then the eggs, milk and flour in a judicious mixture, smooth as cream, with a small spoonful of baking powder sifted with each cupful of flour. It is difficult to give precise quantities, as the corn varies so much, but the batter must be moderately stiff, and trial will decide whether the exact degree of stiffness is attained. It must not spread too much, but puff out to a dainty lightness. The only seasoning required is salt and a little white pepper. Drain and serve very hot.

Cauliflower makes a delightful and more unusual fritter. First boil until partially tender, then plunge in cold water and break up into sprigs. Dip each in a thick white sauce to coat it, and then get cold. Then dip again carefully in fritter batter and fry a delicate brown. Slices of beet-root may be used in the same way; and cucumbers, parsnips, celery, and various other vegetables may be used for this purpose.

DOROTHY,

(Cultivator.)

FROM F. & H. COOKS.

**Cup Pudding:** Mix 1 cup of sweet milk,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups of flour, a little salt, 1 teaspoonful of baking powder and beat it to a smooth batter. Butter 5 cups and drop in each cup a spoonful of the batter, then a spoonful of any kind of fruit you like with as little juice as possible, then another spoonful of batter. Set them in a steamer over a kettle of boiling water. Let them cook from 20 to 30 minutes. Serve with sugar and cream or hot dip if preferred.

**Pork Cake:** One pound of salt fat pork chopped fine,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint boiling water poured over it, 1 cup molasses, 2 cups sugar, 1 teaspoon of saleratus, 1 teaspoon of cloves, nutmeg and cinnamon, a little salt, flour to make it as thick as common cake. Raisins and currants may be added if wished.—[Sea Weed.]

**Delicate Pudding:** One cup of granulated sugar, 1 cup sweet milk, 1 egg, butter the size of an egg, 2 cups raisins, 3 teaspoonfuls baking powder, and flour enough to make it the consistency of cake. Have the raisins well dredged with flour and add them last. Steam in a greased pan for 2 hours.—[Mrs. M. Garner.]

**Doughnuts:** One egg, 2 cups of sour milk, 1 cup of sweet milk,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups of sugar, a little nutmeg, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 tablespoon of saleratus sifted dry into some flour. Stir all together and pour out on a board in a mass. Do not roll, and the dough must not be stiff. The great secret of good success is in having the dough just as soft as it can be handled. Cut with a knife and pinch the ends together to form a ring. There is no shortening except the cream that belongs to that amount of milk. Fry in fat composed of lard and fried out suet; equal parts of each, which is much better than all lard and more economical. You can buy suet at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents a pound, then try it and it is ready for use. Sometimes I use buttermilk in place of the sour milk, and then use sweet skim-milk; or put in an egg, if you do not use skin-milk instead of the now. [Cousin Jeminy.]