

### Antonio Stradivari.

(Requested.)

To mention Cremona is to think of Antonio Stradivari, for this town forty-eight miles south-east of Milan, derives its fame from the life-long residence there of the great violin-maker.

Stradivari was born in 1644, and at an early age was a pupil of Nicholas Amati, a maker of violas (the viol was the immediate ancestor of the violin), and of violins. Amati, a music-lover himself, improved somewhat on the violin-models developed by his father and his grandfather, but it remained for the young pupil to bring this exquisitely sensitive instrument to the highest perfection that has ever been attained.

Himself musical and endowed with a fineness of ear and sensitiveness to timbre that spelled positive genius, Stradivari was soon making violins on his own account, the first following somewhat the Amati models, small, sturdy, and covered with a thick, yellow varnish. But he was not satisfied. He had dreams of an instrument more responsive than this, one that should be the speaking soul of the performer, as ready to weep and to sigh as to burst forth in triumphant paeons. And so he worked on, experimenting with form, with various woods, and their position in the instrument to ensure the greatest resonance, with design and material of sound holes and bridge, with materials for strings that should be of requisite smoothness and lightness.

By 1684 he was making a larger model, with deeper varnish and finer finish; by 1700 he had settled upon a broader design, and by 1715 he had accomplished the "Alard," the most exquisite violin that has ever been produced. For there are Stradivaris and Stradivaris, and it was, no doubt, because of his realization of this, that the great maker named his best instruments, beginning with the "Hellier" in 1679, through a long list, ending with the "Muntz" in 1736.

Stradivari discovered that the number of pieces of wood required to bring out the perfect musical tone and responsiveness is about seventy. The exact principal dimensions of a very fine specimen of his work, yet in excellent condition after two hundred years, are given as follows:

Length of body—14 in. full.  
Width across top—6 11-16 in. bare.  
Width across bottom—8 1/4 in.  
Height of sides (top)—1 3-16 in.  
Height of sides (bottom)—1 7-32 in.

The back of this instrument is in one piece, and its finish is a fine orange-red oil-varnish, left just as the master-hand applied it. It is to the varnish, indeed, that much of the peculiar quality of tone of the Stradivarius violin has been ascribed, but the secret of its composition went into the grave with the great maker.

After his death, in 1737, the craft was still carried on by the sons of Antonio, Francesco, and Omobono, and the shop still was filled with promise in the violas, violoncellos, and violins, that hung upon its walls, but never again was an instrument produced that so reflected and carried on down the long years the loving touch of genius.

Antonio had, however, revolutionized the making of the violin, for after his day all violins were based upon his models.

In these days of piecework and quickly-drying spirit varnishes, of hurry and greed, the soul of the violin has well-nigh slipped off into the great Outside of All Things. Perhaps some day it will come back at the summons of some

gentle, loving spirit, who, incarnated, shall, with fine and tender fingers, and with infinite patience, put piece to piece, and rub and listen and experiment, as did Antonio Stradivari, of Cremona.

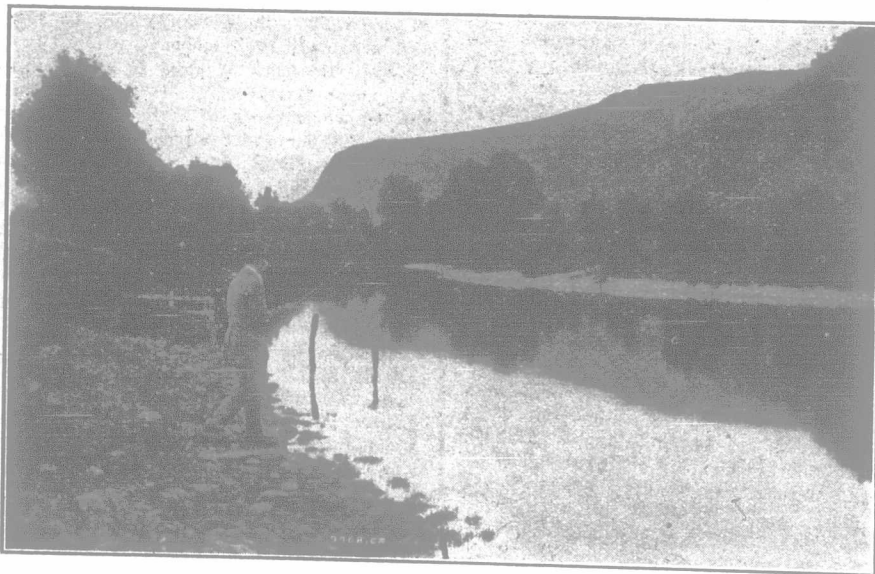
True, the days of Stradivari were days in which the highest in the countries of Europe essayed to be musicians, days in which kings paused at Cremona and Brescia, to buy from the Italian masters of instruments, but such creations of those of Stradivari could never, either in his day or ours, proceed from any other hand than that bent on producing a perfect whole, an emanation of mind, and expression of soul. In this twentieth century, we plume ourselves upon progress. It might profit us to question whether, in our zeal for speed, in our over-division of labor,—in our apportioning of one part to one man, another to another, a wheel to one, a screw to another, and the dropping of the wheel upon the screw to a third in endless reiteration,—we are not losing something, gaining perhaps in quantity, but losing in quality and in men. Does not the history of Stradivarius teach us that in some things, at least, the patient, loving touch, from start to finish, the working out of a vision, the expression of an idea through the craft of the hands, may be necessary to the perfect production and to the needed satisfaction and development of the individuality of the producer? So individuals, so nations.

### Hospital Nursing at Home.

(By Elisabeth Robinson Scovill, late Superintendent of the Newport Hospital.)

#### SEMI-SOLID FOOD.

When convalescence begins, and often before, if the illness is not an extremely serious one, the sick person is allowed to have food that is partially solid—



In the Spring o' the Year.

"Angling is somewhat like poetry, men are to be born so."—Izaak Walton.

jellies, blanc mange, and creams stiffened with gelatine. Liquids pall after a time, and the sufferer turns with disgust from milk, which he sometimes declares he never wishes to see again.

Made into a solid with cornstarch, Irish moss, or gelatine, sweetened and flavored, he will not recognize his old enemy. Nevertheless, it is there, with all its possibilities of nourishment, only being in a new dress it is welcomed instead of being swallowed grudgingly, if not refused altogether.

The preparation of food in such a way that it will be eaten instead of being rejected, is one of the most important duties of the nurse. The tissues, wasted

by illness, must be built up and restored, and this can only be done by means of proper food.

#### MILK AND EGGS.

Milk and eggs contain all the elements necessary to begin the process; it is only needful to present them in such a form that they will tempt the appetite to desire them, and can be easily digested and assimilated once they are safely in the stomach.

The capacity for food varies greatly in different individuals, and at different ages. Too much upsets the digestion, and makes the invalid uncomfortable, besides being only so much waste material to be got rid of, absolutely useless to the body. Too little nourishment weakens the frame and retards convalescence. Each case must be judged by itself, and the happy medium found.

It is better to give food more frequently, and in smaller quantities, rather than to overload the stomach with too large a portion at one time. A little thoroughly digested and taken up by the tissues, is of far more benefit than a larger mass which overtakes the digestion and cannot be converted into such a form as to be easily dealt with by the tissues, crying out for fresh building material.

Enough, and not too much, is sometimes a problem that taxes all the ingenuity of the nurse. The doctor cannot be of much help here.

#### GELATINE.

Gelatine is the substance that causes jelly to stiffen and retain its form. It was once thought to be useless as a food, but later experiments have proved that it prevents the waste of other elements in the diet and, therefore, is important as a building material. If it is not given in sufficient quantity, the flesh-forming substance in the food is

can be stiffened with gelatine and seasoned with pepper and salt.

A quarter of an ounce of gelatine will stiffen a small cupful of liquid in ordinary weather. If it is very hot, or very damp, more is required; in cold weather less will answer the purpose.

When economy is an object, it is best to make only a little at first, then, if it is not liked, the waste is small.

#### CREAMS.

This introduces another valuable class of food for the invalid. The basis is milk, with sometimes a little cream added, flavored, and slightly sweetened. The whole made into a semi-solid with gelatine. Sometimes the flavoring also adds a little more nourishment, as when chocolate, or cocoa, is used. A little less gelatine is required than for jelly.

Many different flavorings can be used. Caramel, which is merely sugar melted and browned in a frying-pan, coffee, the juice of orange, essence of lemon, or almond, vanilla, rose water, a little syrup from preserved ginger, pineapple, or peaches.

The white of an egg beaten stiff can be added to each cup of liquid. The milk and cream is heated, the gelatine, flavoring and sugar added, and the mixture poured on the beaten egg, well stirred, and set aside to cool.

If it can be borne, and is not too rich for the invalid, the yolk of the egg can be added to any of these creams. In this case, it is cooked with the milk until the mixture thickens like custard, and then poured on the beaten white.

#### ICE CREAM.

There is no more palatable way to give milk, cream, and eggs, if desired, to the invalid, than in ice cream. A part of the daily ration can easily be taken in this form, even when milk is disliked, and children are especially fond of it.

A small ice cream freezer, holding about a pint, is very convenient, but ice cream can be made without it. Put the liquid in a small tin, stand this in a larger one, or in a pail, pack the space between with crushed ice two parts, coarse salt one part, and stir the liquid frequently, scraping it from the side of the tin as it freezes. When frozen, cover, and let it stand for fifteen minutes.

The white of an egg can be added if desired, or a whole egg, well beaten before stirring it in. This, of course, adds to the nourishment. Be sparing with the sugar. Any of the flavorings mentioned for creams can be used, also the juice of fresh strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries.

When it is very desirable to add fat to the diet, and there is difficulty in persuading the patient to take it, two level tablespoons of fresh butter can be used to each pint of milk and its presence will not be perceived.

#### SHERBET.

When milk and cream cannot be digested, as is sometimes the case, an egg can be given in a water-ice. Beat the white, or the whole egg, slightly, add half a cup of cold water, a little sugar, and any flavoring preferred, pour in a cup of boiling water, and freeze when cool.

Oyster liquor and clam liquor can be strained and frozen also. It need not be solid, the coolness is grateful to a patient with fever, even if lightly frozen.

Milk sherbet is made by freezing milk, sweetened and flavored, usually with the juice of a lemon. Allow one small lemon to each cup of milk, and mix the juice with the sugar before adding it to the milk.

#### BLANC MANGE.

Blanc mange is the French for white food, but the term is used to cover