

Health and Home Hints

The Invalid's Tray.

BY ALICE CHITTENDEN.

A couple of weeks spent in an up-to-date, twentieth century hospital has opened my eyes on many points connected with nursing, and especially in regard to the setting forth in an appetizing way of the tray for an invalid.

At breakfast, dinner and supper, these trays were artistic creations of the highest order. One dinner tray was a study in golden greens and white as to china and food, with the needed touch of color given by wreathing the salver with racemes of flowers in soft old pink, a flower whose old-fashioned name I could not remember, but whose color and fragrance took me back through more years than I care to count to a sweet, old New Jersey garden.

There was a golden brown chop in a circle of rice potato; crisp, yellow-green lettuce leaves, ivory white at the base; strips of white and gluten bread spread with golden butter and piled log-cabin fashion on a pretty fluted dish of green and white china; pale green squash; a quivering mold of yellow custard and a pretty teapot in green and gold, with fragrant, amber tea and a tiny pitcher of yellow, thick cream.

A supper tray which stands out pre-eminently in my memory, by reason of its exquisite tones of color, contained a plate with four luscious oysters on cracked ice, the bivalves laid in the form of a star, and between the rays, yellow wafers and discs of lemon. There was a plate of lettuce sandwiches in strips an inch wide by three long; a mold of Farina, with its attendant pitcher of cream, a glass dish of apple sauce whipped to a foam, with white of egg; triangles of white and gluten bread buttered and cut in the thinnest of slices; a pitcher of cocoa and three perfect Reve D'or roses.

Sometimes dainty sprays of Cecil Bruner roses lay among the tempting viands and fell in delicate profusion over the edge of the tray. Again little clusters of violets peeped over its rim and perfumed the whole atmosphere, or the ruddy glow of crimson strawberries would be accentuated by the deep red of roses of Sharon nestling in their glossy, dark green leaves.

An ordinary fruit, vegetable or meat may be quite transformed by the manner in which it is being served. An orange may be cut through crosswise and served with a very small dish of powdered sugar, and an orange spoon, or, it may have the whole fruit cut in carpels or sections from pole to pole and the skin drawn back from each enough to loosen it, and then again drawn into shape. If a baked potato form a part of the meal, cut a slice from the upper side, take out the potato with a small spoon, mash with butter, cream and salt, whipping light with a fork, fill the skin again and stand in the oven long enough for the little cone of potato exuding from the top to take a golden brown tinge.

Fruit foams are digestible and dainty for invalids. Any sort of stewed fruit, apricots, apples, peaches or prunes should be whipped smooth while warm, and when thoroughly smooth beat in the white of an egg whipped to a stiff froth; serve in thin glass, a pretty cup, or low Japanese bowl.

A patient may be beguiled into eating nutritious food simply through the manner of its preparation. To speak of raw beef sandwiches would doubtless destroy the appetite of a delicate person, but if you will prepare

them as follows he will eat them without thinking or knowing, probably, what he is eating. Lay a thin slice of round steak on a clean board, and with a rather dull knife, scrape off the meat, leaving the tough fibres remaining; do the same on the other side, laying the scraped beef on a dish. Spread two slices of very thin bread with the beef, seasoning plentifully with salt; lay on these two slices of plain bread and cut into very small triangles, squares or strips. Arrange these prettily on a fringed napkin laid on a pretty dish and garnish with very small inner leaves of lettuce or with water-cresses.

Another way of serving beef which is digestible, palatable and nutritious, is to mold the beef, scraped as above, into small olives; heat a small frying pan very hot, sprinkle with salt; lay in these olives and shake over a hot fire for a minute or two until the outer surfaces are heated; turn onto a hot dish and garnish with strips of buttered toast.

During a season of gastric fever my nurse brought me bacon which she declared to be healing to the inflamed stomach, and which certainly was appetizing when prepared in this way. The bacon must be very fat, and so cold that it is possible to cut slices actually not more than a sixteenth of an inch in thickness. Cook on a small barred double broiler over clear coals and turn the broiler constantly until the bacon curls and takes on a golden brown color.

There should be a set of dishes, small in size, kept especially for the sick room, and although it may not be possible and is not necessary that these should be costly, they should be cheerful in coloring and quaint in shape. It is a wise precaution, too, to make from fine, worn table linen, little fringed napkins of all sizes and shapes; round, oval and square, for these enhance greatly an invalid service.—Table Talk.

Verse For a Bedroom.

The following little poem in gold lettering on watered silk, bordered with sprays of green, is on the wall of a bedroom in Skibo Castle, Mr. Carnegie's country seat in Scotland. It is full of comfort and tenderness, and to a weary spirit it sounds like the benediction that follows after prayer:

Sleep sweetly in this quiet room,
O thou, whoe'er thou art,
And let no mournful yesterday
Disturb thy peaceful heart.

Nor let to-morrow scare thy rest
With dreams of coming ill;
Thy Maker is thy changeless Friend—
His love surrounds thee still.

Forget thyself and all the world,
Put out each glaring light,
The stars are watching overhead;
Sleep sweetly then. Good night!

To Ice Cakes.

If the cake is rich in butter, dust it over very lightly with a little sifted pastry flour, and let stand for ten minutes, then brush off any which does not adhere; this absorbs any grease on the surface and makes the icing adhere better. There are several kinds of icing which may be used; but as you say you have no difficulty with the boiled icing, we presume that is your preference. Spread a quantity of the icing over top and sides with a spoon, then dip a long, flexible knife into boiling water until it is heated, shake off the extra water and smooth first the top then the sides, repeating the dipping in hot water often as may be necessary.—Table Talk.

Sparks From Other Anvils.

The Presbyterian Banner: Christianity is no narrow creed or system of abstract worship, but it is a practical faith that turns itself into fact, touching life on every side and ministering to it at every point.

Religious Intelligencer: Those who weary of the obligations of the Christian religion are those who do not practise religious principles very much. The more faithfully one serves the Lord, the more reasonable and the more delightful all his commands become.

Herald and Presbyter: When homes are what they should be, and parents are found walking in the fear of God, training their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, the church flourishes and God is glorified.

The Christian Guardian: A soundly converted man is the best and strongest argument that can be advanced in proof of the divine origin of Christianity. In coming to Christianity's Christ, the weakest and worst are delivered from the bondage of sin, and introduced into the liberty of the children of God.

Sunday School Times: Action is essential to progress. Whether we are going in one direction or in another, we must be in motion. To be utterly at rest is a barrier to effort in the right direction. Going in the right direction is, indeed, secondary or supplemental to going somewhere, rather than not moving at all. There is a great practical truth in the statement, "The Lord cannot switch a motionless engine." We must be going in some direction before we are going right.

New York Observer: The trouble with a good many people is that instead of being Christian missionaries they are Christian omissionaries, exhibiting a great capacity for doing nothing, or for doing only easy things. The Christian life, however, is properly the strenuous life—the life that takes its possessor and spurs on its devotees. No absolute idler can enter the kingdom of heaven, or, if he did, the spirit of idleness would speedily be taken out of him.

Christian Observer: People want a paper that has a definite aim. Politicians want a paper that sustains their party; physicians, a journal that helps them in their practice; manufacturers, a journal that guides them to the best machinery and the happiest economics. And Christians want a paper whose great dominant aim and purpose is to help them to be better Christians. Take it all in all, we apprehend that quite as large proportion of Christians subscribe to religious papers now, and read them, as in any preceding year.

Interior: The traveller in Italy to-day sees upon every side a standing yet a crumbling Church. It is founded upon an everlasting foundation, but it is built of materials sure to fall in the final trial, the trial of time. The Roman Church has been said by a most eminent English historian to be the most perfect structure ever devised by the human intellect. It has outlasted principalities, kingdoms and empires, but it will not outlast time. It rests upon Christ, but it is built of human interests and passions. Mighty as it is, it contains within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. It will not be shattered by external foes, but it is bound to crumble through its own processes of decay. But when it falls, its foundation will still survive it.