

Minnie May's Department.

Food for Cold Weather.

This is an important question which naturally arises with us, for I dare say you find the way to please father and brothers is to prepare a good meal (and have it ready at the proper time). I know I find it the case. However, the question is, do we vary our food to make it consistent with the weather?

We are more apt to give winter's food in summer time than summer's food in winter. Still there are certain dishes especially adapted for cold weather, and at the present season of the year we may call attention to some of them. First, however, it may not be amiss to consider on what general principles one kind of food is adapted for hot countries, and another for cold. The first principle is to remember that in cold weather we require *fat*. Fat and grease contain a large quantity of carbon, and this carbon taken and absorbed into the system keeps up the animal heat.

Of all winter dishes, perhaps none is so suitable for cold weather as that rather vulgar dish, pea-soup. Persons who affect to despise pea-soup should remember that it is one of the most variable soups ever made. Poor pea-soup, which really owes almost its whole goodness to the split-peas from which it is made, is indeed poor stuff for epicures, though a very cheap and wholesome form of nourishment for the hungry poor. Good pea-soup is an exceedingly delicious compound, and I will describe how to make it.

First of all, one great advantage of pea-soup is that a greasy stock, scarcely adapted to make any other kind of soup, is really best suited for the purpose. For instance, the water in which a large piece of pickled pork has been boiled, or even the greasy water in which ham or bacon has been boiled, is admirably adapted for making

pea-soup. As a rule, the water used for boiling salt beef is too salt to be used for making soup; however, very often by soaking a piece of salt beef in fresh water for twenty-four hours before boiling it, the liquor left will be found to be not too salt for making pea-soup—the cook, of course, remembering that no further salt is added.

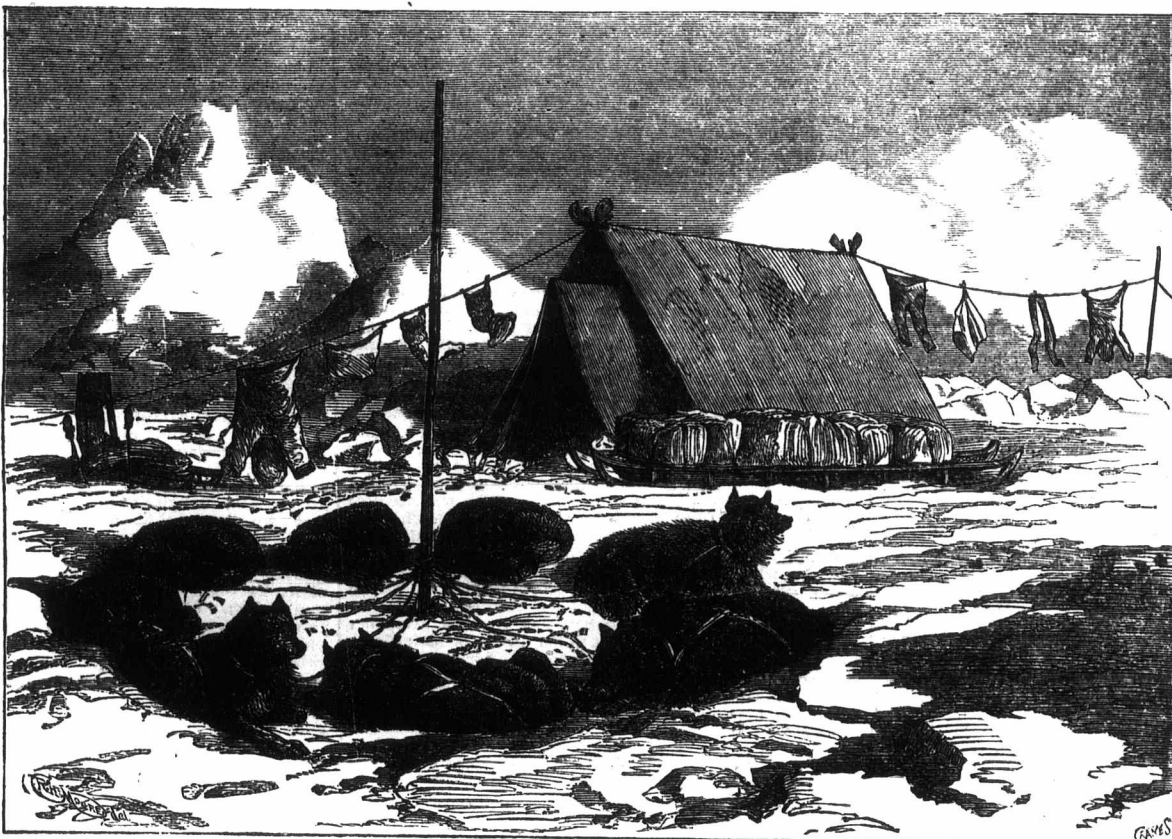
We will suppose, therefore, that some stock, or rather some greasy liquor, has been left, say in quantity about two quarts. I would here suggest that the water in which, say, a piece of fresh silver-side of beef has been boiled, should be used again to boil a good-sized piece of bacon, that may be served up hot with some roast fowls, that which is left forming a cold breakfast dish. First of all, take a quart of split-peas, and put them in a large basin, and let them soak in fresh water for nearly a day, a little piece of soda rather bigger than a pea being put into the water to render it softer. Should any of the peas float on the water, take them off and throw them away. Next, strain off the peas, and put them in the greasy stock mentioned to boil, adding to the two quarts of liquor one good-sized head of celery, four good-sized onions, two carrots, two turnips, and a little parsley. Let all this boil till the whole is thoroughly soft, occasionally skimming the soup, taking off that nasty thick film of fat which will sometimes rise to the surface. When the peas are thoroughly soft, strain the whole through a wire

sieve into a large basin; pick out the stalk of the parsley, and with a good-sized wooden spoon rub the whole through the wire sieve.

This is the great secret of good soup. Too often the cook will not take the trouble to send the whole through the sieve. It is undoubtedly a troublesome affair, and very apt to make the wrist ache. However, the result well repays the trouble, and the cook generally can call some one to her assistance to take a turn with the spoon. It will also be found advisable every now and then to moisten the ingredients in the sieve with some of the liquor that has run through; this rather helps the process. Now, soup made in this way, in which the head of celery, the onions, the carrots, the turnips are all sent through the sieve, as well as the peas, is a very different affair from soup which has been simply flavored by having them boiled in it. Indeed, pea-soup should really be called puree of peas, and when care is taken in its composition a very nice puree it is.

Pea-soup should, of course, be sent to table hot; and as it possesses, like all purees, the power of retaining its heat for some time, it is the better adapted for cold weather.

Some dried mint and some small pieces of toasted bread should always be sent to table with pea-soup; or pieces of bread cut square, the shape of



That flag that braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze.

very small dice, may be fried a bright golden color in some hot lard.

Another very excellent dish for cold weather is Irish stew. Irish stew has the following strong points in its favor as a seasonable dish:—First, it retains the heat for a long time; secondly, it contains a considerable amount of fat; and thirdly, which makes it a desirable dish for all weathers, it is probably the most economical dish ever sent to table. The best joint for making Irish stew is neck of mutton. First cut off nearly all the fat, the reason being that when mutton is boiled the fat swells enormously. What is cut off will make an admirable suet-pudding—another dish adapted for cold weather—that can be flavored with grated lemon-peel. Pare about four pounds of potatoes, and cut them into slices, and allow them to boil for about a quarter of an hour; by this means the water contained in the potatoes will be extracted—and all water held in roots is far from wholesome. Next slice up five large onions, cutting them cross-ways, so that circular rings fall in slicing. Then take a good-sized stew-pan—an enamelled one is best—and cover the bottom with slices of potato and onions; add a little pepper and salt, then cover this with a layer of meat, the quantity required being about three pounds. The trimmed neck or loin of mutton should be cut into rather thin chops, and the short bones at the end of the neck should, of course, be all cut into sep-

arate pieces. Again pepper and salt the meat, and cover it over with a thin layer of sliced potato and onion. The whole should be packed rather loose—i. e., not much space should be left between the pieces, so that a very little water added will be sufficient to fill up the stew-pan, till the top layer is moistened. Add this quantity of water, so as to avoid leaving any of the potato or onion uncovered. Next cover over the stew-pan, seeing that the lid fits close; place something heavy, such as a four-pound weight, on the lid to keep it down, and allow the whole to simmer gently for about three hours. Be careful, however, not to let it boil, as that is apt to render the meat hard. Also on no account take off the lid during the stewing process, as by so doing you let out the flavor.

It will be readily seen how exceedingly economical this dish is, as absolutely nothing is lost, for the liquor is served up as well as the potato and onion. In roasting a joint some of the flavor necessarily goes up the chimney, and in boiling a joint some goes into the water in which the joint is boiled. Irish stew is, however, one of the few dishes in which there is absolutely no waste whatever.

The Arctic Expedition.

The latest of the expeditions that have made

voyages of discovery in search of the North Pole, has returned, and how far their labors have been crowned with success, and what they have proved to be impossible to be done, are the themes of a thousand writers. Nearly two years ago the good ships Alert and Discovery sailed from Portsmouth manned by British sailors, under the command of Commanders Nares and Markham. The result of the expedition has been happily called a successful failure—successful inasmuch as they sailed farther north than any ship had ever before sailed and planted nearer to the summit of the globe than flag had ever been planted, the British flag,

Nor was this all they accomplished; they doubled the northern part of America, and discovered in Cape Columbia the Polar termination of the continent. Sledge expeditions went still farther to the east and to the west from the ice barriers that forbid the good ships' progress. They failed to find the expected sea, but they proved that there was none, but, on the contrary, a dreary expanse of ice, apparently impenetrable, cheerless, and chilly, presented itself to the voyagers, where it was reported that an open sea awaited them. Captain Hall in his voyage had thought he saw a hazy land far away to the northward, but it has proved to be one of those illusions that vanish on near approach. The Alert went into winter quarters in latitude 82° 27'. They had already convinced themselves that navigation beyond that point was impossible, that the Polar ocean so long talked of was a mere chimera, that an immense frozen, rugged ice-field—ice averaging eighty feet thickness, and frozen throughout unnumbered ages—occupied the vast area where it had been said an open sea existed. Capt. Markham, who headed the Polar sledge party, after reaching latitude 83° 20' 26" north wisely determined to halt. He had now attained the highest latitude ever gained by man. He had not reached within 400 miles, though he had surpassed the efforts of even that prince of discoverers, the match-

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