

Prospero. The bare wall and uncovered floor shine with cleanliness; the three windows are crystal clear; at a long table between the range and the benches stands a slender Frank, white-capped, white-jacketed, white-aproned, and girded about with clean napkins, who might be a poet, but who is the dexterous pair of hands which the clever brain of Monsieur Blot animates.

Against the wall, and on a side table, and under that table and about the range, but nowhere confusedly, are whole families of saucepans, tribes of pots, nations of pans and races of porcelain kettles, sieves from infancy to well-developed maturity, boxes of all ages, spoons, pewter, wooden, plated, whose, "infinite variety" rivals Cleopatra's, and a collection of knives, large and small, pointed and blunt, but all of a glittering keenness. The boxes clearly labelled, contain spices, sugar salt, rice and other appliances. Amidst the orderly disorder stands a crystal vase filled with gorgeous autumn flowers.

A black-board between the windows announces the

Bill of Fare.

Potage puree a la reine,
Fillet of beef, larded with tomato sauce,
Cauliflowers au gratin,
Sea bass, baked,
Chicken santi a la Marengo,
Stuffed tomatoes,
Choux a la creme.

The hour strikes. The brain nods intelligence to the hands which take up their labor. The Professor begins his instructions. To these votaries he has already explained the theory of the art. There remains to be disclosed to them only the fine practices—to be exhibited the delicate results of his process, which, he is certain, will reward their most serious attention.

Twelve note books appear, and twelve pencils hover expectantly over the paper.

The soup, we discover, already exists in the embryo, for a French artist never allows his soup kettle to leave the range, where it gently and contentedly simmers, ever ready to receive the awkward knuckles which must not disfigure the pretty side-dish, the marrowy bone whose unsightliness banishes its succulence from the platter, the trimmings of the shapely joint, the skimmings of the turbulent pot whence savory chickens or a tender leg of veal send forth appetizing prophecies.

Soup being incipient then, we are requested to consider the fillet, which must

be treated first, as requiring longest baking. Upon the fillet we concentrate our gaze, and we learn that it weighs five pounds, that it is carefully cut and trimmed, and, altogether, a credit to the bovine originator. Baking, Monsieur explains, is at best an ill substitute for roasting, the juices are dried, the meat is toughened. Nevertheless, he flatters himself, when the joint is dressed, and cooked as he advises, the injuries which the oven inflicts are in a measure overborne, and the wronged and royal beef "shall hae his ain again."

Pervaded with sympathy for the beef, and mentally heaping objurations on the oven, we hang on the next words of the philanthropic Professor. The assistant under magnetic control, no words being spoken, slices a carrot, reduces an onion to impalpable grains of powder, adds salt and pepper, lays the larded beef in the pan upon this vegetable basis, pours a ladleful of broth over it, and sets it over the fire where the liquid boils furiously, and the beef smokes. Monsieur explains that this sudden application of extreme heat slightly incrusts the meat, keeps the juices pent within, and makes it therefore nutritious. While basting it frequently with the broth keeps the surface tender.

We turn now to the tomatoes. One of the flashing knives describes an equatorial circle round eight polished, scarlet spheres, and they are hemispheres. The acidulous contents being scooped from the ruddy bowls into a shining saucepan, bread crumbs—which, in this skilful *menage*, put on a hundred dainty and toothsome disguises—the most delicate spices and a suspicion of onions rush together to form the stuffing which your newborn confidence in Monsieur Blot assures you will be excellent. And now it is time to turn the fillet still bubbling on the range.

Soup, beef, tomatoes being all under way, let us examine the cauliflower. Potatoes, explains Monsieur, being very expensive, we do not to-day cook them. American housewives cherish the potato, but at times it is extravagant, and it is never indispensable. These tomatoes with their stuffing shall be found very good. The cauliflower, refined by our process of cooking, shall not remind you of its coarse family, the cabbage, and really, in this dinner, so admirable there is no place for the potato. A contempt for that esculent forthwith possesses us, and we sigh over wasted postal currency ignorantly spent therefor.