

HOW ONE MAID SERVES A TABLE.

BY MRS. MARTHA WILSON.

HAVING been unfortunate enough in my first years of married life to find that when all the house-parlor maids who professed to "quite understand waiting at table" came to show their skill, it was limited to the knowledge that potatoes should be handled with meat, and beer with cheese. I have, therefore, written out a few directions, which I think may be useful to others.

First, find out what there is for dinner as the table must be laid accordingly. Secondly, be sure that the glass and silver are quite bright, and the china well polished. One person can wait well on six people, "Waiting well" means that each guest is supplied with all he or she wants, viz., bread, vegetables, cruets, etc., as often as they want them, and not before.

Suppose the dinner to consist of soup, fish, entrée, meat, sweets, cheese and dessert. Having laid the cloth, the maid should put the soup tureen and soup plates before the carver's seat, and go immediately to the drawing room, and say, "Dinner is served, pleased," and then wait at the dining-room door till the guests are all in the room.

After grace has been said she should take the lid off the soup tureen, and bring back in her hand the fried toast, etc., and hand both to the chief lady guests, and then do the same to all the others.

When all the soup plates are removed, the soup tureen is carried out, and the fish and plates brought in—which should be waiting outside—these are placed before the carver. The fish and sauce are handed to the first lady, then lemon (if necessary) and cruets, and then to the others, as before. When the last person has nearly finished, the entrée is brought in. A clean hot plate is then placed in front of each person, which should be done as soon as the fish plate is removed, and the entrée handed round to each, beginning with the first lady, and then straight round the table. While the entrée is being eaten, the wine is handed round, if wanted. When the last person has nearly finished, the joint and vegetables are brought in. The joint and plates are placed before the carver, and as soon as it is carved, the meat and one vegetable taken to the chief lady guest, and, immediately after, second vegetable and cruets, and so on to the rest.

As soon as any one has finished, their plate is changed for a pudding plate, with a dessertspoon and fork in it. If the pudding or sweets be hot, the plate must be hot also. If there is more than one sweet, sufficient plates and spoons and forks must be ready on the side table. As soon as anyone has finished his sweets or pudding his plate must be changed for a cheese plate, with a small knife on it.

While people are eating their cheese, all glasses, tumblers, water bottles, salt cellars and tablespoons must be cleared from the table on a small waiter, and the bread crumbs removed with a scoop or napkin, leaving the fruit and flowers untouched.

When the crumbs are brushed away, a dessert plate, with finger glass and dessert knife and fork on it, should be set before each person.

The dessert is then handed round, and put back in the same places on the table; and then the maid must go to the drawing-room and see to fire and lights, and clear away the trays or stands from the hall.

The parlor maid should always move about as silently as possible, and never wear creaking boots, nor speak unless spoken to, but answer any question politely.

With a dinner *a la Russe* everything is carved on a side table; but this is seldom done unless there is a man servant and more than one to wait, so this will not come under these directions for waiting single-handed.

NEW KITCHEN ACCESSORIES.

BY MARIE JORDAN.

OWING to the change—or, rather, changes, for they are many—that have come over our housekeeping ideas of late years, almost every part of our household has suffered a revolution—peaceful, indeed, but none the less thorough. For instance, mechanical contrivances of all sorts are coming daily more and more into use, even our servants—that most conservative of all classes—having learnt to welcome them.

Nowhere is the change more apparent than in our kitchens which, if at all well appointed, requires scores of odds and ends, for the most part unknown to our mothers, though, judging from the pictures and models of old kitchens, and the directions in venerable cookery books, by no means so unknown to our ancestresses.

A bain-marie is really a necessity in any well ordered kitchen, but hitherto the price has been prohibitive to the ordinary house mistress, owing to its being made in copper, against which metal, moreover, there is in this country a great prejudice for kitchen use. At last the happy thought has occurred to some one to make this requisite of either seamless steel or block tin, thus lowering the price by more than half, and obviating the danger of verdigris indissolubly connected with copper pans in this country. So there is now no excuse for leaving cook unprovided with this really most useful utensil.

Again, we are not generous enough in the matter of cutters of all kinds, which are, after all, cheap luxuries. Cutlet cutters especially shine by their absence, and yet how useful they are in shaping lobster or salmon cutlets, avoiding the handling otherwise necessary, and which done by an inexperienced cook, is apt to render the entrée as tough as shoe leather. While who does not know the difference between the ordinary sandwich of daily life, and the dainty little circle, hexagon, or triangle which appears as a delicate hors d'œuvre, or a pretty little adjunct of the five o'clock tea tray, in a well-appointed establishment?

Vegetable cutters are also great helps, as with them you can vary ordinary consommé *ad infinitum*, and render a commonplace soup a really high-class one; while they fully repay their cost by the improvement they effect in such dishes as *salade Russe* or a *macédoine* of vegetables.

Another desirable adjunct is fireproof china, which is now put to all kinds of uses, from daily omelet and stewpans to jars for such dishes as jugged hare or *pâté à la Souvaroff*, or for the manufacture of meat essence. *Apropos* of china, I wonder how many people know of and use the "Lippen" pie and pudding dish, made with a channelled rim, which effectually prevents the boiling over and consequent waste of the gravy or fruit juice? or the pretty new vegetable dishes lately brought out—one a reproduction in china of the familiar revolving breakfast dish; the other being an ordinary vegetable dish and cover, with the latter so affixed that when raised it is supported by a groove, so that its contents can be handed round without removing the cover to the sideboard, and are kept hot while on the table.

TWO NEW USES FOR POTATOES.

Inflamed eyes are often relieved by cutting a large potato in two, scooping out the inside, and binding over the feverish lids.

Try a potato poultice for Rheumatism. Boil two potatoes in their "jackets." When done, mash potatoes,—skins and all—spread on a cloth and apply. A friend once told me she experienced great relief from an application of this kind on a rheumatic foot. Another friend tells me she carries a potato in her pocket always, to prevent rheumatism, renewing it when withered.