

AS SEEN THROUGH WOMAN'S EYES.



A LUCKY FIND.

This exquisite and very valuable fan, decorated by Watteau, is one of six discovered quite by accident in an old lumber room of a house at Isleworth, England, when the contents were being catalogued for a sale.

Why Vegetables are so Healthful.

(BY MRS. S. T. RORER.)

The primary reason why vegetable foods are considered healthful is that they are free from the danger of pathological germs. Fish may or may not be diseased, it may or may not be healthful; and while all dangerous or pathological germs are killed by heat we prefer to select foods free from disease. There may be, however, dangerous germs on the surface of vegetables, either from the earth or water.

It is always a question in my mind whether or not a strictly vegetarian diet is best. I particularly dislike "isms"; one is likely to go to extremes. A mixed, common-sense diet is without doubt the best. We should use neither overcooked nor raw foods continually. A careful study of the chemical constituents of common foods will enable every housewife to decide for herself whether or not she should eat a raw, a cooked, a restricted or a mixed diet. Personally, I eat meat once a day, for dinner at six o'clock; I do not use pork or veal, or fish without scales, or the scavengers of the sea, lobsters and crabs. These are no better than the carrion eaters of the air, crows and vultures. Stale and unwholesome sea-food is, perhaps, the most dangerous of all foods.

RHEUMATIC PERSONS SHOULD EAT VEGETABLES.

Our working animals, the "beasts of burden," repair and build their muscular organisation, under heavy labour, on vegetable materials. Their digestive apparatus is rather different from that of man's, but we must not think for a moment that man cannot live without flesh. Persons having gouty or rheumatic diathesis should use a vegetable diet. Meat is more easily digested than many vegetables; it is, however, rich in water, and contains far less tissue-building material than either old peas, beans, lentils, or peanuts. Meat requires less digestive energy, which induces the man of hustle and bustle to use it as his main diet.

Experiments with vegetable foods are limited to a very narrow range. I have yet to see a good vegetable diet list containing nuts, fruits, cereals, nitrogenous seeds, succulent and starchy foods in proper proportions. To the mind of the average housewife vegetables mean potatoes, cabbage, and onions, and these will not alone support life. They are practically waste foods;

they do not contain nitrogen, and the potato has but very little starch in proportion to its bulk. Nuts, the hard fruits mixed with cereals, fruits, and such easily-digested food as rice, give a sustaining power not attainable by a meat diet. The lower bowel and liver are both kept active by the succulent vegetables, carefully cooked.

Take cabbage, for instance, one of the most delicate, delightful, and slightly vegetables when properly cooked; it becomes indigestible, coarse, and unsightly when cooked in the usual fashion.

HOW VEGETABLES MAY BE CLASSIFIED.

Vegetables may be divided into four classes: those containing nitrogen, muscle and tissue building foods; the carbohydrates, starches and sugar, foods producing heat, energy, and fat; the oleaginous foods, those containing fat, as nuts and olives, heat and energy producers; and the succulent vegetables, largely water and holding in solution physiological salts and acids.

In the first class, among the tissue-building foods we have old peas, beans, lentils, and nuts; the cereals are also rich in nitrogenous matter.

The second class, the carbohydrates, are rice, white bread, sweet and white potatoes, macaroni, chestnuts, winter squash, the cereals, and such food auxiliaries as tapioca, manioc, and taro.

The succulent vegetables comprise the cabbage tribe, carrots, turnips, spinach, asparagus, the onion tribe, cress, lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, summer squash, celery, radishes, green peas, and string beans. We look to the cereals for our bone and tooth making structure. Whole-wheat bread is one of the most important foods for children.

The nitrogenous elements of vegetables are first chemically acted upon in the stomach the same as meat; mastication breaks them apart, but the mouth secretions do not chemically change them. Starches, during the processes of mastication, are acted upon by alkaline saliva in the mouth. This fact alone makes it necessary thoroughly to masticate bread, potatoes, and all foods containing starch or sugar. Cereals frequently provoke intestinal indigestion—not because they are improper foods, but simply because they are not masticated; they are swallowed quickly. This is the difficulty with all soft foods

like mashed potatoes and mushes. After the primary digestion of the mouth the starches pass through the stomach unchanged, the digestion being finished in the upper part of the small intestine, and for this reason boiled starches provoke indigestion; the foods enter for final digestion in an unprepared condition. Fats are emulsified, and are absorbed as fats; they undergo no chemical change in the body so far as we know."

There is no difference in the digestion of nitrogenous vegetables and of meats as far as the chemistry is concerned. A greater mechanical effort is required for vegetables, but as the quantity is less this makes very little difference. Meats are partly-digested foods; the animal has broken down the vegetable and made it into living tissue.

WRONG AND RIGHT WAYS TO COOK VEGETABLES.

A short visit to the house of a neighbour will frequently make quite plain why we prefer meat to vegetables. It is largely due to the want of knowledge in vegetable cookery and the sorts to blend at each meal. The wrong way to cook vegetables is to put them over the fire in water partly boiling or lukewarm; throw salt in or not as it happens; boil until they are overdone, and then drain the best part down the sink; the tasteless, water-soaked material left in the pot is then dressed up with salt, pepper and butter, or some other high seasonings, to put in the flavour that has been destroyed by bad cooking.

To be quite perfect all vegetables should be put over to cook in boiling water. This does not mean water that has been boiled and cooled, but it must be boiling rapidly when the vegetables are dropped in. Do not pour boiling water over them, but put them into the water. To green vegetables add salt in proportion of a teaspoonful to each half-gallon. Green vegetables and potatoes are rich in potash salts; these salts have a tendency to thickening, as it were, the blood. They are bad for rheumatic people. Common salt, chloride of sodium, has a tendency to correct the influence of the potash salts. Hence, hygienists use salt on such vegetables as spinach, cabbage, onions, potatoes, but not in the cereals or on meats. The underground vegetables, the roots, tubers and swollen stems of plants should be cooked in unsalted water. These are rich in woolly fibre; naturally this fibre is toughened in salt water; we cook them to soften the fibre, and it is even better to use soft water, if possible.

Turnips are white, sweet and palatable, one of the daintiest and most delicious of vegetables when cut into dice and cooked carefully in unsalted water.

Boiled in salted water they are coarse, pink and unpalatable.

EAT GREEN VEGETABLES EVERY DAY.

Green vegetables do not contain, from our standpoint, true nourishment, but they are of equal value as waste and should be taken at least once a day. Vegetables not containing starch may be eaten raw; but such roots as turnips, carrots and beets must be scraped or grated. The dense fibre renders them difficult of digestion.

The green vegetables, watercress, the cabbage family, turnips, radishes, celery, lettuce, spinach, green peas, beans, cucumbers, parsley, onions, leeks, carrots, salsolots and asparagus all contain a volatile principle which gives them flavour, and when they are boiled too long or too rapidly is driven off, leaving the vegetables rather tasteless. Any of these may be eaten uncooked, with a little salt or with a French dressing. They prevent constipation.

Another group of vegetables usually classed as succulent are roots, as parsnips, carrots, turnips and Jerusalem artichokes. These contain sugar and some starch, but do not take the place of potatoes or rice. Turnips and Jerusalem artichokes contain a material known as inulin, which belongs to the starchy group, but is not converted during the processes of digestion into the same form of sugar; hence, these and all succulent vegetables may be eaten by diabetic people.

Onions are stimulating. Even a suspicion of garlic in the salad will give a quick sense of warmth.

CAREFULLY-COOKED POTATOES ARE WHOLESOME.

The fibrovascular layer of the potato just underneath the skin contains nearly as much nourishment and mineral matter as the remaining portion of the potato; hence the necessity of paring sparingly. Carefully-cooked potatoes constitute a wholesome and easily-digested starchy food. Do not use them every day, however, as variety is the spice of appetite. They contain seventy-five per cent of water and one per cent of proteids, with eighteen per cent of starch and one per cent of mineral matter; as compared to rice, with its seventy-six per cent of starch, seven per cent of albuminoids, and only fourteen per cent of water, they rank low in nutritive value.

In boiling, rice takes up water to the volume of fifty-two per cent, loses two per cent of proteids and twenty per cent of starch. Save rice-water for soups or for starching fine laundry. Hominy, frequently served as a starchy food, contains sixty-seven per cent of starch with twelve per cent of proteids, and one and a-quarter per cent of mineral matter. When we use hominy we must cut down the quantity of meat.

WHAT MAY BE SUBSTITUTED FOR POTATOES.

Sweet potatoes, yams, and pumpkins contain, in addition to their starch, a notable amount of sugar. The ordinary

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