fifteen minutes in the Chafing Dish will be ample in nearly all cases.

As this is mainly a true story of my own personal adventures among the pots and pans, I can hardly do better than describe the first dish I tried my 'prentice hand upon, with the devout wish that all neophytes may be as successful therewith as I was.

Beef Strips.

The experiment, the preliminary exercise, if I may so term it, has no name, although it savours somewhat of the Resurrection Pie, unbeloved of schoolboys. Let us call it Beef Strips. Cut three thick slices from a rather well-cooked cold sirloin of beef, cut these again into strips a quarter of an inch wide and about three inches long. Take care that they are very lean Chop up half a dozen cold boiled potatoes (not of the floury kind) into dice. Put the beef and the potatoes into the Chafing Dish. Light the lamp and see that the heat is steady, but not too strong. Add at once a good-sized walnut of butter, a teaspoon of Worcester sauce, salt

and pepper. For at least ten minutes turn over the mixture continually with a wooden spoon until it is thoroughly heated. Turn it out on to a hot dish, and garnish with half a dozen tiny triangles of toast.

This is a simple luncheon or supper dish which takes little time, and—to my taste at least—is appetising and satisfying. Like all Chafing-Dish preparations, it can be cooked on the table, with no more protection than a tray under the wrought-iron stand, and a square of coloured tablecloth upon your white one to receive possible splashes or drops.

Jellied Ham.

Now for exercise number two, which I have christened Jellied Ham, and commend as a dish very unlikely to go wrong in the manipulation.

Get your flame steady and true, and put a small walnut of butter in the dish. When it is fluid, add a good dessert-spoonful of red currant jelly, a liqueur glass of sherry, and three drops of Tabasco sauce. Drop into

this simmering mixture a few slices of cold boiled ham cut thin and lean, and let it slowly cook for six to eight minutes. If you wish to be extravagant, then instead of the sherry use a full wine-glassful of champagne. It is by no means necessary to eat this with vegetables, but if you insist on the conjunction, I would recommend a purée of spinach, directions for which appear hereafter.

This Jellied Ham is an agreeable concoction, which I find peculiarly soothing as a light supper after having seen an actor-manager playing Shakespeare. This is, however, after all only a matter of taste.

It has always seemed to me that different forms of the drama require, nay demand, different dinners and suppers, according to the disposition in which one approaches them. For instance, before an Adelphi melodrama, turtle soup (mock if necessary), turbot and rump steaks are indicated, whereas a musical comedy calls for an East Room menu, and an Ibsen or G. B. Shaw play for an A.B.C. shop or a vegetarian restaurant respectively. But I only hint at the broad outline of my idea,

which is capable of extension to an indefinite limit.

Vegetarian meals do not appeal to me. There is a sense of sudden and temporary repletion followed shortly afterwards by an aching void, which can only be assuaged by a period of comparatively gross feeding. Besides, judging from the appearance of my vegetarian friends (in whom maybe I am unfortunate) they often seem so much to resemble some of the foods they eat as to render themselves liable to be dubbed cannibals. But this is probably mere prejudice.

Minced Chicken or Game.

To resume the cult of Chaffinda. Here is another dish which I recommend to the beginner. It is a simple mince. Take any remains of chicken or game, pheasant for choice, and mince it (or have it minced) small, but not too small. Never use a mincing machine. Put the mince aside, and mix in the Chafing Dish the following sauce : a full walnut of butter, a tablespoon of flour, and a pinch of salt and pepper ; add gradu-

ally about a tumblerful of milk. Keep continually stirring this and cook it well for five minutes, adding three drops of Tabasco sauce and half a tablespoon of Worcester sauce, also a squeeze of a lemon. When it is thoroughly amalgamated throw in the mince and let it get hot without burning. Serve it with toast or very crisp biscuits.

The only objection I know to this mince is that all cold birds, especially cold pheasant, are so excellent that it seems almost superfluous to hot them up. But there are occasions when the gamey fumes from Chaffinda are very alluring, and, after all, it is poor work eating cold cates at midnight, however tempting they might be at breakfast.

Our forebears were unanimous in their praise of the lordly long-tail. In a letter from Sidney Smith to "Ingoldsby" Barham, the worthy cleric says: "Many thanks, my dear Sir, for your kind present of game. If there is a pure and elevated pleasure in this world, it is that of roast pheasant and bread sauce; barndoor fowls for Dissenters, but for the Real Churchman, the Thirty-Nine times articled clerk, the pheasant! the pheasant!"

Toast.

It should perhaps be mentioned that the making of toast on the Chafing Dish is the easiest of functions. The asbestos tray, already referred to, is placed over the flame, and on the metal side the bread in rounds, triangles, or sippets; a few minutes serve to toast the one side adequately, and on being turned over it can easily be browned through. Mrs. Beeton is loquacious on the art of toast-making, and lays down divers rules, but she knew not Chaffinda. A modern essayist who discourses learnedly and most sensibly on toast, makes a remark in his chapter on breakfasts, which although not entirely germane to my subject, is so true and, to my thinking, so characteristic, that I cannot refrain from quoting it. He is referring to marmalade. "The attitude of women to marmalade," he says, "has never been quite sound. True, they make it excellently, but afterwards their association with it is one lamentable retrogression. They spread it over pastry; they do not particularly desire it at breakfast;

and (worst) they decant it into glass dishes and fancy jars."

How true, how profound, how typical!

But this is wandering from the point, which is cookery, not casuistry. Women are never out of place in connection with the good things of the table, although they do not often aspire to the omni-usefulness of the well-meaning, if ill-educated, lady who applied for the position of nurse to one of the field hospitals during the Boer war, and mentioned as her crowning qualification that, "like Cæsar's wife, I am all things to all men."

Mutton Cutlets.

After this little digression it will be well to turn to more serious things—cutlets, for instance. Obtain from the butcher a couple of well-trimmed mutton cutlets, and from the greengrocer sufficient green peas that, when shelled, you will have a breakfast-cupful. Melt a walnut of butter in the Chafing Dish. Into the melted butter drop a tablespoonful of flour and a sprinkling of chopped chives. A teaspoonful of Worcester sauce and three

drops of Tabasco, together with salt at discretion, will suffice for flavouring, and care must be taken that the mixture does not boil. Put in the cutlets, and when they begin to turn brownish add the peas, and half a cupful of milk. About fifteen minutes should cook the meat through if your spirit flame be strong, otherwise it may take somewhat longer. A very good substitute for Worcester sauce, in this connection, is Sauce Robert, which it is unnecessary to manufacture, as it can be bought ready made, and well made too, of the Escoffier brand. With certain meats it is an excellent condiment.

By the way, in some very old cookery books Sauce Robert was termed Roe-Boat sauce, an extraordinary orthographic muddle. An omelette was likewise known as a "Hamlet."

This suggests the somewhat too sophisticated schoolboy's description of Esau as "a hairy, humpbacked man, who wrote a book of fables and sold the copyright for a bottle of potash."

It may be deemed superfluous, and in that case I apologise beforehand, to insist on the

most scrupulous cleanliness in dealing with the Chafing Dish and its adjuncts. Not only should the dish itself be kept spotless and thoroughly scoured, but the stand, the lamp, the implements, and the glass and china should be immaculate. Servants are easily persuaded to look after the cleaning process, and do it with a certain amount of care, but it can do no harm to understudy their duties and add an extra polish all round oneself. It gives one too, a personal interest in the result, otherwise lacking. I recommend the use of at least three dishcloths, which should be washed regularly and used discreetly. The Chafist who neglects his apparatus is unworthy of the high mission with which he is charged, and deserves the appellation of the younger son of Archidamus III., King of Sparta. Cleanliness is next to all manner of things in this dusty world of ours, and absolutely nothing conduces more to the enjoyment of a mealet that one has cooked oneself than the knowledge that everything is spick and span, and that one has contributed oneself thereto by a little extra care and forethought.

A word of warning here. Never use "kitcher butter," or "kitchen sherry," or "kitchen eggs," or "kitchen" anything else; use the very best you can afford.

An armoury of brooms, brushes, scrubbers, soap and soda is in no way necessary. A couple of polishing cloths and a little, a very little, of one of the many patent cleaners is all that is required. A clear conscience and plenty of elbow-grease does the rest.

The British equivalent of the continental *charcutier* is of inestimable service to the Chafist. At his more or less appetising emporium, small quantities of edibles can be purchased which are excellently well adapted for the cult of Chaffinda, especially if one be inclined towards the recooking of cold meats, instead of the treatment of them in a raw state. Both have their advantages—and their drawbacks. It is a general, but totally inaccurate, belief that meat once cooked needs only to be hotted up again. Nothing could be more fatal to its flavour and nutriment. A certain amount of the good juices of the meat must inevitably have been lost during the first process, and therefore great care

must be taken in the second operation to tempt forth, and, in some cases, to restore the natural flavour. Cold cooked meat needs long and gentle cooking, a strong clear flame, without sudden differences in temperature, and it may be taken as a general rule that cold meat needs practically as long to cook as raw meat.

Browned Tongue.

For example, take half a dozen slices of cooked tongue, spread on each of them a modicum of made mustard, and let each slice repose for about two minutes in a little bath of salad oil (about enough to cover the bottom of a soup plate). Put the slices one on top of another until they make a compact little heap. Put the heap of tongue between two plates, so as to expel the superfluous oil. Let it remain thus for half an hour. Then put a nutmeg of butter in the blazer, dismember the heap of tongue, and put the slices into the frizzling butter and turn them until they are brown. A little sauce, Worcester, Robert, or Piquant, may be added to

suit individual taste. Serve very hot, with sippets of toast.

I have ventured to christen this dish *Browned Tongue*, which is simple and descriptive, but every Chafist is entitled to call it what he likes. There is little, if any, copyright in Chafing-Dish titles. Alexandre Dumas, author and cook, protests against the mishandling of names: "Les fantaisies de saucer, de mettre sur le gril, et de faire rôtir nos grands hommes."

Personally I object to cooking simple fare and then dubbing it *à la Quelque chose*. Outside the few score well-known, and, so to say, classic titles of more or less elaborate dishes, which are practically standardised, there seems to me to be no reason to invent riddles in nomenclature when the "short title," as they say in Parliamentary Bills, is amply descriptive.

It has been my ill-fortune to be introduced, at an otherwise harmless suburban dinner, to a catastrophe of cutlets, garnished with tinned vegetables, and to be gravely informed, on an ill-spelt menu, that it was "*Cutelletes d'Agneau à la Jardinnier*," which would be

ludicrous, were it not sad. Then how often does the kind hostess, without a punitive thought in her composition, write down *Soufflet* when she means *Soufflé?*

But mistakes are easily made, as witness that popular sign of a French cabaret, particularly in the provinces, *Au Lion d'Or.* If you look carefully at the signboard, you will find a man asleep, the punning name of the hotel implying *Au lit on dort.*

But the whole question of Menus (Bills of Fare, if you please), and their mistranslation, is too vast to enter upon here, alluring though the subject may be. The language of the restaurant cook, save in especial instances, is as bad, although in a quite different sense, as that of the Whitechapel Hooligan. At the same time, it is absurd to insist upon the literal translation of the untranslatable. "Out of works" for "Hors d'œuvres"; "Soup at the good woman" for "Potage à la bonne femme"; "Smile of a calf at the banker's wife" for "Ris de veau à la financière"; and, lastly, "Anchovies on the sofa" for "Anchois sur canapé," are all well enough in their way, but hardly an example to be

followed, although they make "very pretty patriotic eating."

It would be ridiculous to run away with the idea that because certain folk misuse the language, French should be henceforward taboo at our dinner-tables. Such a notion is ignorant and impossible. But the Gallic tongue should be used with discretion and knowledge, and if the enterprising Chafist invent a new dish of eggs, there is no law to forbid his naming it *Œufs à la Temple du Milieu.* It would only show the quality of his erudition and his taste. There seems no particular reason why we should not replace *Rôti* by Roast, *Entrée* by Remove, and *Entremet* by Sweet—except that it is not done; it is an affectation of humbug, of course, but the greatest humbug of all humbugs is the pretending to despise humbug.

Alderman's Walk.

On revient toujours à son premier mouton—that is to say, let us get back to Chaffinda. The next dish on the experimental programme is "The Alderman's Walk," a very old English

delicacy, the most exquisite portion of the most exquisite joint in Cookerydom, and so called because, at City dinners of our grandfathers' times, it is alleged to have been reserved for the Aldermen. It is none other than the first, longest and juiciest longitudinal slice, next to the bone, of a succulent saddle of mutton, Southdown for choice, and four years old at that, though this age is rare. Remove this slice tenderly and with due reverence from the hot joint, lay it aside on a slice of bread, its own length, and let it get cold, thoroughly cold. Then prepare in the Chafing Dish a sauce composed of a walnut of butter, a teaspoon of Worcester, three drops of Tabasco, three chopped chives, and an eggspoon of made mustard. Stir these ingredients until the amalgamation is smooth and complete. Then take the bread, which should have absorbed a good deal of the juice from under the Alderman's Walk, cut it into strips, and lightly toast the strips. Drop the meat into the sauce, and let it cook for eight minutes, turning it once, that is, four minutes for each side. Slide it out on to a hot dish, put the toast round it, eat it in a hurry, and

thank your stars that you are alive to enjoy it. This is a dish which has few equals and no superiors. It is simple, innocent, toothsome, satisfying, and several other things.

Something like it, but lacking its artistic severity, may be found in Alexandre Dumas' Great Dictionary, but it is complicated with eccentric accessories; there is a turbulent confused foreground to it which effectually conceals the mutton, but then, of course, poor Dumas, although he knew and appreciated, could rarely obtain the real Southdown.

At the time that the great author was overwhelmed with commissions for novels, after the enormous success of "The Three Musketeers" and other masterpieces, he was commonly understood to put books in the market which were written by Auguste Maquet, and merely signed by himself. Dumas, as is well known, was a great amateur cook, and in fact prided himself more on his dishes than on his novels. One day he invited the famous Aurelien Scholl to dinner, and put before him a salmon mayonnaise which he—Dumas Père—had made with his own hands. "Taste that, Scholl," he said, "and tell me how you like it."

Scholl tasted it and made a wry face. "Really, Dumas," he replied, "I think it must be by Maquet."

Having been thus trained by the recipes here given, it seems reasonable to suppose that the Chafist is able, after a profound study thereof, to appreciate the possibilities of the Chafing Dish, and may therefore be permitted to dip as he listeth into the various recipes which follow, none of which are complicated or expensive, and most of which require little, if any, previous preparation. At the same time I would most earnestly beg the Chafist carefully to rehearse all his impromptu effects, and never to leave anything to chance. Always have your condiments, your garnishings, your "fixings," as the Americans say, ready to hand. Let the manipulation of the Chafing Dish partake of that Art which conceals Art—simply because everything is foreseen, and nothing postponed till the last moment. Let your parsley be ready chopped, your toast ready cut, your lemon duly cleaned, your spare dishes hot and ready, and, lastly, your apparatus in thorough working order. You may then proceed in all good faith and earnestness.