

# DELICIOUS SECRETS I LEARNED FROM FARM COOKS IN FRANCE

BY MARIE CECILE CHOMEL.

I used to use my very best butter for the table and the poorest in the cooking. Now I do the other way round. Ten years ago I'd have considered the idea too absurd for words. Now I pay the top price for butter to cook with and pay it cheerfully. I get my money's worth not only in better food but also in easier cooking methods. It shortens the time previously devoted to kitchen labors about half.

More revolutionary still, cream on my table is no longer a controlling food principle. To be sure, I still use cream and butter but I cook them in the food.

This trick I learned in the country homes of France—but mostly in one kitchen in particular, where Madeline reigned over the big stove and the twelve-foot table set squarely in the centre, affording wonderful space for all her preparations.

The first day, when Madeline dipped liberally into the big crock of butter fresh from the butter and cheese room, I asked about "cooking butter." Madeline had never heard of such a thing. When I explained, her hands went into the air.

"Surely it is that you jest," she cried in horror. "You tell it to me that in your great country you use the butter that is not quite fresh for the food? Never has Madeline heard of such a thing. The taste of the food depends upon the sweetest, freshest butter."

Again Madeline dipped into the crock. She was cooking peas that day, talking as she stirred. "Here in France we pick the peas very tiny," she said. "And the green beans too, so small and tender they can almost be cooked without water. See how they are petite," and Madeline held up her shining copper saucepan. The peas were only about a third of the size we pick in our own gardens. The next day her green beans looked mere strings, so young were they. "But of a deliciousness," as Madeline said. Tiny beans have an entirely different flavor and succulence.

When Madeline cooked peas she seasoned them with two young onions, a few lettuce leaves and a sprig of parsley. Half a cup of water was added and the peas cooked until tender in a covered pan. Butter was added in the proportion of one tablespoonful for one cup of peas, with salt and pepper. This is the famous "petits pois," that so delight visitors to French restaurants and which are imported in the form of canned peas. In buying French peas one must specify if the peas already seasoned are desired, when heated butter should be added.

**FRENCH COOKERY IS SIMPLE.**  
A point to remember is that the French cook never cooks butter into vegetables. Nor does she cook the butter for her melted butter sauces. To do so destroys the creamy quality, she will tell you, and makes it oily.

Cucumbers are often served cut into squares and cooked in boiling salted water. Ten minutes will suffice to make them tender. The pieces are drained and served with melted butter and fine herbs.

Madeline explained about the fine herbs, which, she said, "one must make with all the good things, from soup to sauce." Among her herbs were chive, parsley, chervil, tarragon and thyme. The box in her kitchen window sprouted parsley and chives and out in the garden she gathered the chervil and the shallots.

"And," she added, "when you cut the vegetables for your soup, stick four or five cloves into the leak."

Madeline told me that cucumbers were very good with a cream sauce. She also cooked carrots, turnips, celery, chicory and kindred white-stalk vegetables in boiling salted water and used them with different sauces to afford variety. One day there was a cream sauce, next Bechamel and a third time maitre d'hotel. Or, as she most frequently did, the vegetables were simply dressed with butter—but never butter that was cooked in.

The same general rule applies to cabbage. Cooking in salted water makes it more delicate and tender. There was, however, one variation of

## Pads for Dresser Drawers

A pretty dress of either silk or cotton which is no longer desired for wear makes excellent pads for the dresser drawers. Rip or cut the dress apart at the seams and wash. Cut pieces to fit the drawers, allowing a little extra for the padding, to take up. Two thicknesses of sheet cotton will be right for this padding; sprinkle between the two any favorite sachet powder, place the two pieces of the cover together ready for sewing—the under side may be of the same or another material—pin in place, sew around, turn back here and there and the pad is done. Now fit it in the bottom of the drawer and with six thumb tacks secure it in place. A drawer thus fitted up for one's clothing is especially pleasing. There is no objection, of course, to using other material than that here suggested.

cabbage that I found delicious. The cabbage was boiled just enough to be tender in as little water as possible, so none of the minerals would be lost.

Then it was chopped roughly and into a buttered mold went a layer of cabbage from which the moisture had been squeezed, then a layer of chopped meat, shredded scraps of beef and pork, even a little left-over rabbit, bits of butter going over each layer. The mold was then cooked slowly while a brown sauce was prepared from butter, flour and water, one tablespoonful of fat to each tablespoonful of flour.

Only young, tender cauliflower is used. It is cooked in boiling water from fifteen minutes to half an hour, removed as soon as tender and either served with butter or a sauce or as an hors d'oeuvre.

Brussels sprouts are cooked fifteen or twenty minutes; young ones need only ten minutes. Here again the seasoning is plain butter or one of the sauces. Asparagus is served with Hollandaise.

Madeline's new potatoes were delightful, boiled in salted water and served with maitre d'hotel sauce. Sometimes she put her small boiled potatoes into a pan in which she had melted half a cupful of butter and fried them to a nice brown.

When using cold potatoes Madeline sliced them very thin. She warmed them in any kind of sauce she had at hand, or she sauted them in butter and sprinkled parsley over the top. For Lyonaise the thin onions were first sauted, fried in small layer of butter and then the potatoes added and the whole browned. Madeline did not use a white sauce with her au gratin potatoes; instead she simple grated cheese over the thin slices, added the inevitable butter and slipped the dish into the oven to turn a charming brown.

There was a puree of dried peas wholly delightful. The peas were soaked and then cooked with a pound of salt pork, three or four carrots and onions, according to size, seasoned with parsley, chives and bay leaf and pressed through a sieve.

So general is the use of butter in cooking that the white navy beans, plain boiled, are sent to the table with a deep well of melted butter in the centre.

For her cream sauce Madeline used real cream. This again was not extravagant, as her cream supply was reserved exclusively for butter, cheese and cooking; never for coffee, a pitcher of hot milk being the accompaniment of the coffee pot. Half a pint of cream was heated and thickened with a tablespoonful of flour mixed with a little water. Salt was added and the sauce removed from the fire when a half cupful of butter was melted in. For most uses a tablespoonful of vinegar seasoned the sauce.

The white sauce is not so rich, being made of half a pint of boiling water, a tablespoonful of flour, half a cupful of butter and yolks of two eggs. The

boiling water was taken off the top, leaving on which the sauce was to be used. In this way none of the valuable properties which had been lost were lost.

It is a trick of French cooking to use a little vinegar to give brilliancy to sauces for vegetables. Then the white sauce generally came from Madeline's hands with a tablespoonful or two of vinegar. A little experience will show with which vegetables this flavor is liked. My own method is to beat in the yolks of eggs after removing the sauce from the fire.

To prepare the maitre d'hotel sauce mix finely chopped parsley with softened butter, season with salt and pepper and melt on a hot dish. This is the favorite seasoning of steak and fish and can be successfully used with any of the boiled vegetables in place of plain melted butter.

Bechamel sauce is easily prepared by heating three-fourths pint of milk and thickening it with a tablespoonful of flour. Season, add chopped chives or parsley or both and melt in half a cupful of butter.

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Heavier underclothing for winter is unnecessary, according to one well-known doctor; all that is needed is an overcoat for outdoor use.

## Sunday School Lesson

May 15. Peter at Pentecost, Acts 2. Golden Text—Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—Acts 2: 38.

**ANALYSIS.**  
I. PETER ASSUMES THE DUTIES OF APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP, 12-14.  
II. HIS INSPIRED TESTIMONY TO THE WORD OF GOD IN CHRIST, 32-41.

**INTRODUCTION.**—The festival of Pentecost, which is alluded to in Leviticus 23: 15, had come to be associated with the original giving of the Law to Israel. The legend had grown up that the Law had been offered to all the nations of the world, but that Israel alone had received it. It was fitting that the same festival which commemorated the beginning of the old era of the Law should also mark the birthday of the new era of the Spirit. From this time onwards we find the Christian Church depending no longer on law or tradition, but on the direct guidance of the Spirit of God.

**I. PETER ASSUMES THE DUTIES OF APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP, 12-14.**

Vs. 12-14. On no one had the great experience of Pentecost produced a greater change than on Peter himself. As he rises to speak, we feel that the old hampering self-consciousness of the man has vanished. New convictions have brought new power. What a change upon this man who had formerly denied his Lord! No language is now too great or glorious to apply to his Master. But we know what has happened. Through the Resurrection, the convictions of Peter and of his fellow-disciples have been growing in strength and intensity till now on the day of Pentecost they break into a flame. The weak knees have been strengthened. The stammering tongue has been inspired. It is always so when God assumes control of the human spirit.

**II. PETER'S INSPIRED TESTIMONY TO GOD'S WORK IN CHRIST, 32-41.**

V. 32. Peter speaks as one who feels that the event of Pentecost has a historical significance for the whole nation of Israel, and he connects the new prophecy and the gift of tongues with Jesus' enthronement as the Messiah. God has raised Jesus from the dead, and given the Christians compelling proof that he is still carrying on his work. The infatuated nation of Israel had thought to end the work of Christ when they nailed him to the cross, but the event has proved otherwise. Christ is still working, no longer indeed upon the earthly plane, but the higher plane of his heavenly life.

V. 33. Peter points to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Christian community as the proof that Christ has been raised by God to the throne. The Spirit is the royal gift of the Messiah to his people. Notice that this verse brings together the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. These are the fundamental conceptions of Christianity: "Abba, Father," "Lord Jesus," "Holy Spirit."

Vs. 34-35. Peter now quotes Psalm 110: 1 as a scriptural prediction of Christ's exalted reign. This Psalm was very precious to the early Christians. It confirmed their faith that God's Messiah was not after the earthly or national, but after the heavenly pattern.

V. 36. Peter now makes the application of the crucified Jesus, whom the Jews put to death as a pretender, is shown by divine proofs to be Israel's "Lord and Messiah." He is "Messiah" because He is God's final agent to redemption. He is "Lord" because to him belongs the throne, and because to him worship is to be offered.

Vs. 37, 38. The conscience of the Jews is roused by Peter's testimony, and the apostle takes occasion to urge their repentance. Let them now receive the Messiah whom they have so tragically rejected, and be baptized in his name. Forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit are promised to the penitent.

V. 39. The offer of God's salvation is made primarily to the Jews, both those of Palestine, including their children, and those who are scattered in distant lands.

V. 40. The call is urgent. The present generation by its rejection of Christ is shown clearly to be "crooked," that is, off the right course, and judgment is impending. The gospel calls men to abandon a world which is doomed and which must shortly pass away.

## SELLING FARM ON SMALL SUM DOWN CONTRACT PLAN TO BE AVOIDED

BY FRANK J. SECOND.

A farmer who wishes to retire has a plan to sell the place on the contract scheme to an ambitious young farmer for \$1,000 down, and the rest to be paid later. The young man is to pay taxes, insurance, upkeep, interest, instalments, and in addition to pay a stipulated sum each year to the owner. At the end of a certain time, when certain conditions have been met, the owner makes out a deed to the place. It has taken the young man five years to lay by the \$1,000 in addition to his farming equipment.

The owner is chuckling to himself to think that he has the \$1,000 cash to put out at interest when he moves to town, and he also will have the interest on what the young man owes him, on which to live. In addition, he is free from expensive taxes and upkeep, besides having no tenant to worry him. The young man sees himself his own boss, making improvements on his own place and increasing its fertility instead of enriching a stranger's soil, and with the added advantage that no landlord can sell the farm out from under him, as has happened three times in five years.

**DOESN'T ALWAYS WORK.**  
The other day an old man who sold his farm three years ago on such a plan, came to tell me his troubles. He had been obliged to put the man off the farm and take it back by law, as the tenant (he could hardly be called anything else) refused to budge. The interest and taxes had been paid by the owner for two years, no improvements had been made, the buildings had gone to rack and ruin, every stray board and piece of lumber on the place had been used for kindling wood, every fence was dilapidated, the manure had not been hauled out, windows and lights were broken, the lawn was uprooted by pigs, trees in the orchard were ruined by stock—there was no end to the neglect and damage.

That man had received \$1,000 "rent" for three years on 100 acres of land, and that amount less the court costs, the repairs and all, did not make \$2 an acre when summed up, not counting the damage to the soil. A neighbor charged him \$50 for cleaning the barn, and the manure was so deep that he said he lost money at that figure. Of course, you may say that he should never have moved to a distance and left such a man in charge. But there is another

V. 41. How successfully Peter preached is shown by the vast accession to the Christian Church which took place at this time.

## Tuberous Begonias Are Good Farm Flowers.

I know of no flower which will give a finer display of blooms over so long a season and with so little care as the tuberous begonia plant, which flowers continuously and freely from June to frost. One of the most beautiful of all summer flowers and very easily grown, it is little known in Canadian gardens, particularly in country sections.

After once being set out in the spring it requires no further attention, except an occasional watering in very dry weather, until time to take up the bulbs again in the fall. The flowers themselves are of splendid size, single or double, and are available in a wide range of pure brilliant colors which include almost every imaginable shade from purest white to deep orange, crimson and yellow. There are also trailing or hanging types, suitable for window boxes or hanging baskets. The growth is vigorous and dense so that as soon as the plants begin to develop no weeds have a chance.

To have tuberous begonias do their best they should be planted in partial shade and in soil which has a generous quantity of leaf mold or chip dirt mixed with it, so the roots can be happy in loose, spongy and slightly acid soil.

The tuberous begonias belong to the class known as "tender summer-flowering bulbs." They may either be started in the house or in a cold-frame, and set out as growing plants R. H.

## Pumpkins for Dairy Cows

Is the old practice of feeding pumpkins to dairy cows going out? I have been on quite a few farms recently, and on only one farm did I find any pumpkins or squashes. It used to be common practice on our farm, and on neighboring farms as well, to grow pumpkins for pigs and cows every year.

Too bad the practice is dying out in some sections. Pumpkins are palatable, cows like them, and they have approximately the same feeding value as beets, roots and apples.

Pumpkins are of greatest value when fed at the rate of 30 to 60 pounds a day in addition to a good grain-and-hay ration. The seeds, instead of being poisonous or deleterious to milk flow, are probably the most valuable part of the pump-

side to it. The young fellow had illness and misfortune, and became sour and disheartened, as it is easy to do when burdened with hopeless debt, so he skinned the farm for all he could get for a bare living for his family and held to it as long as he could.

**THE SMALL DOWN PAYMENT.**  
Hardly a week passes but somebody comes to me with the same plan to get rid of high taxes and repairs, and along with him comes some young farmer who is perfectly willing to mortgage his own future and the future of his young wife and their children by such a scheme as that. One can not but feel sorry for both, for both are bound to find, in a few short years, that they have been following a will-o'-the-wisp.

One young man I know, a fine fellow, must have \$9 a day for his expenses before he or his family get a thing. They are actually suffering for necessities, though putting up a brave front, and in the end they will have to give up.

If you have a farm, hold on to it until you can get at least half the sale price, and if you are a tenant move every year rather than to go into a hopeless plan paying for a farm with \$1,000 down and \$14,000 to pay interest on. That is, if you wish to sleep well nights and not lose money.

The same as dahlias, or the bulbs themselves may be planted in the open ground after warm weather is assured.

In the fall, after the tops have been blackened by the first frost, they should be taken up, dried off and the bulbs stored in dry soil or sawdust where there is no danger of freezing, and preferably where the temperature will not go below 40 to 45 degrees. The bulbs may be kept over year after year indefinitely.—F. F. R.

## Felt Tie Backs.

Fasten your window draperies back with tie-backs made of strips of felt an inch and a half wide and twelve inches long. They require no hemming or edging and can be decorated in a few minutes by embroidering wool flowers on them with odd bits of yarn. Old hats of soft felt may provide material for several tie-backs or inexpensive light felt may be bought. Punch a hole in each end of the tie-back to fasten over the screw hook or small nail driven in at the side of the window frame.—F. G.

A "hard water" town of 40,000 people wastes about a ton of soap daily because of the large proportion of mineral salts in the water.

I prevent white diarrhoea in baby chicks by giving them, when about 20 hours old, a weak solution of potassium permanganate each morning for a drink. This is given regularly for several weeks. It does not hurt them, and tones up their systems. Treating the new chicks this way has kept them free from white diarrhoea.—

## MUTT AND JEFF—By Bud Fisher.



Where Sir John came a Canadian grow in his yo be erected as nition of the g man. On its f let telling the who became a Canadian statu