Christmas Dinner

On Christmas day, of all days, the menu should show discrimination instead of superabundance. The characteristic of ancient cookery was profusion; of modern, is delicacy and refinement. The capacity of human digestion is limited and is not afforded any special dispensations on feast days.

Certain traditions must be observed in considering our Christmas menu. We desire the generally accepted goose or turkey and the historic plum pudding. These are our foundation stones. The food value of these two, with their accessories, is high, consequently we center the nourishment on these two courses, adding to them others of esthetic value which will not multiply our dietetic sins sufficiently to impair health. With this end in view the following menu has been arranged:

Clear Soup — Toast Fingers
Pickled Peaches — Salted Peanuts
Green Goose, Roasted
Potato Stuffing
Garnish of Jellied Apples and Celery Tips
Spiced Gravy
Steamed Sweet Potatoes
Turnips a la Creme
Celery-and-Orange Salad
Up-to-date Plum Pudding
Foaming Sauce
Priscilla's Pumpkin Pie
Kris Kringle Cakes — Black Coffee

Have the soup clear and delicately flavored, floating a thin slice of lemon. In serving a holiday dinner, the soup should merely refresh and stimulate the appetite and not render it indifferent to the courses that follow. In this menu, the soup may be omitted, as also the salad, with an abundance of good cheer remaining. As arranged, the dinner is to be served in courses, but it may be modified to lessen the labor of serving. Arrange the dessert on the sideboard or side table, with the exception of the pudding, which should be served piping hot on heated plates, accompanied by the sauce in a separate dish. Coffee is preferably served at the close of the meal, but may accompany it when desired. Taken clear, it aids digestion, and cream and sugar should be omitted when such a bountiful dinner is partaken of, even if indulged in on other occasions.

The dressing of a goose requires more time and attention than that of a turkey, the oily skin needing a good scrubbing. Rinse outside and in. The goose should be considerably less than a year old, a "green" goose, four months old being the choicest, and it should be well fatted.

A dry-plucked fowl is preferable, but if it is scalded, remember it takes much longer for the water to penetrate to the roots of the feathers of a goose than those of a chicken. Draw and truss the goose the same as a turkey, remembering to remove the tough leg-tendons. Cut through the skin very gingerly about 2 inches below the leg joint, bend the leg at the cut against the table and break the bone; then withdraw the tendons. If cut, they cannot be removed.

One of the most toothsome goose stuffings is made of potatoes and parboiled onions cooked together until tender, mashed and seasoned highly with pepper, salt, butter and sage. The latter, and the onion, may be omitted, or the inside of the goose may be rubbed with a cut onion. Another dressing is made of chopped tart apples (peeled and cored), bread crumbs and boiled onions. But a more up-to-date method is to serve the cooked apples as a garnish or in a carefully prepared sauce. Apples in some form are the invariable accompaniment of roast goose.

HOW TO ROAST.

Roast on a rack in the dripping pans. Lay slices of fat pork over the goose, as it aids in drawing out the excess of oil. After three-quarters of an hour, remove the pork, draw all oil from the pan, and return goose to the oven, well dredged with flour seasoned with salt and pepper. After the flour has browned, begin basting, and continue this every 15 minutes. Formerly it was the custom to add some water to the pan, but good authorities omit it, and do not begin to baste until the fat has been drawn off. Cook until the joints separate easily, from 1½ to 3 hours. An eight-pound goose requires about two hours. Insufficiently cooked, a goose is very indigestible and unpalatable. It should be killed at least two days before being roasted. Garnish the goose with tips of choice celery, alternating with jellied apples.

These latter will be found delicious. Pare and core whole apples, large and firm ones being preferable. Fill the holes with red currant jelly, sprinkle all over with lemon juice and dust with granulated sugar. Place a little water in the pan around the apples, and bake them until candied but not broken. Preserved ginger may be used instead of the jelly.

Spiced Gravy—Try this novelty in making gravy, and it will be found appetizing. Boil the giblets in three pints water an hour with a few cloves and allspice, one tablespoon grated lemon peel, one-half onion, chopped, one red pepper and one-half teaspoon salt. When the giblets are tender, remove them, mince, season with a dash of pepper and a saltspoon of salt, keeping them hot in the gravy boats. To the gravy add one tablespoon butter and two tablespoons hot browned flour, stirring until smooth. Strain and add one-half glass hot water or wine if too thick. Let simmer a few minutes and pour in the gravy boats.

Steamed Sweet Potatoes—These are better than boiled. Pare, steam until tender, put a pinch of butter on each and set in the oven to dry and brown a trifle.

Turnips a la Creme—Cut peeled turnips into half-inch dice, boil in salted water until tender, drain; to each quart of turnips add one tablespoon sugar, a little salt, and lastly three tablespoons cream into which a beaten egg is stirred. Serve very hot.

Celery and Orange Salad—Crisp the white stalks of celery in ice water, to which lemon slices have been added. Wipe the stalks dry, cut in tiny pieces and dress with French dressing. Add this just before it is to be served. Turn into a serving dish and garnish with slices of sour orange, cut lengthwise of the orange, then in halves lengthwise. Wafers should accompany it.

THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING.

And now comes the plum pudding without which, and holly and mistletoe, Christmas hardly seems real. Only once a year can the genuine Christmas pudding, decked with holly and wreathed with flames, make its picturesque entrance to the festive board. So many rich, indigestible concoctions have been served under this head, with their train of horrors next day, that it is with both pride and pleasure we present the following by Mrs. Kretschmar: Three-fourths cup New Orleans molasses, one cup brown sugar, one cup finely chopped suet from the region of the kidneys, three cups bread crumbs, two cups flour, one cup sweet milk, one cup mixed raisins, citron and currants, chopped, one teaspoon soda. Sift the sugar into the molasses and add the milk and suet. Mix the soda evenly through the flour and add the fruit to it, tossing it about to insure its being coated. Then put into the wet mixture, adding last of all the bread crumbs. Boil or steam in molds three hours. Cook beforehand and re-heat.

No demon of dyspepsia lurks in its luscious depths, and partakers will rise up and call you blessed Serve with foaming sauce, or any other preferred. Foaming sauce is made thus: Two-thirds cup fine white sugar creamed with one-third cup butter; to this add three tablespoons thick cream, the white of one egg, and one-half teaspoon vanilla, beating them in with an egg beater. Set the bowl of sauce in a vessel of hot water, and use the egg beater steadily until the mass becomes light and smooth. Serve immediately. It should be a foam throughout, with no settling on the bottom. If it is allowed to stand or too much cooked, it will not be perfection.

In serving the pudding decorate it with springs of holly. Pour a tablespoonful of brandy around the base just before serving and light. No one need scruple to use this, or alcohol. It evaporates in the flame. Another way is to dip squares of loaf sugar in brandy and place around the dish, then set it afire and carry the dish to the table while it is wreathed in weird flames.

Priscilla's Pumpkin Pie.—To one pint cooked pumpkin add one egg, one gill molasses, butter size of an egg, one gill milk, one scant teaspoon salt, one teaspoon ginger, one-half teaspoon cinnamon, one-quarter teaspoon of nutmeg. This makes one pie. Bake 40 minutes.

While it is well to have a goodly supply of fruit cake and other varieties prepared in advance for the holidays, for the Christmas dinner, especially if there are children, it is far better to serve small, fancy cakes simply made, and lacking richness. They may be made very attractive by the various shapes and by the icing, which can be elaborated with citron, nuts, red candies or candied cherries, if desired. Mrs. Rorer gives the following, which can be made at slight expense, and which invariably pleases the little folk:

"Beat one cup butter to a cream and add, gradually, one and one-half cups sugar with the yolks of two eggs. Beat until very light Sift two and one-half cups flour with two teaspoons baking powder. Beat the whites of the two eggs to a stiff froth, add one-quarter pint of water and half the flour to the first mixture and beat thoroughly. Add one-quarter pint water, the egg whites and the flour. When smooth and light, turn into two shallow buttered baking pans. Bake in a quick oven for 15 minutes Turn out carefully and cut into fancy shapes, stars, diamonds, squares, etc.

SANTA CLAUS ON THE WAY.

DECORATIONS.

The dinner table itself should proclaim the season by its artistic and seasonable decoration. Each hostess may exercise her ingenuity in using the materials at hand whether they be holly and mistletoe, laurel or other greens. Do not crowd the table, and arrange the programme of cooking and serving as far as possible in advance.

In the menu suggested nothing complicated, expensive or out of season is chosen. Cheese, nuts, except in small quantities, and a profusion of rich dishes have been omitted intentionally.

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS.

What is that which increases the more you take from it?—A hole.

Why is anger like a potato?—It shoots from the eye.

When is a bonnet not a bonnet?—When it becomes a woman.

Why is a philanthropist like an old horse?—Because he always stops at the sound of woe.

If Dick's father be John's son, what relation is Dick to John?—Grandson.

What is that which no one wishes to have, and no one wishes to lose?—A bald head.

Why is a chicken-pie like a gunsmith's shop?—Because it contains fowl-in-pieces.

When is butter like Irish children?—When it is made into little Pats.

What is that which is above all human imperfection, and yet shelters and protects the weakest and wickedest as well as the wisest and best of mankind?—A hat.

Of what trade is the sun?—A tanner.

What everyone wants, what everyone gives, what everyone asks, and what very few take?—Advice.

What is the difference between a cat and a speech?—The one has its claws at the end of its paws and the other has its pauses at the end of its clauses.

What is probably more annoying to a great reader than to have a stye in his eye?—To have a litter in his study.

When is a Scotsman like a donkey?—When he stands on his banks and braes.

When is a man not a man?—When he's a-shaving.

FREE DINNER FOR BEGGARS

For nearly 300 years now Nancy, in France, has sent out its officials at Christmastide with instructions to bring back fifty-four beggars to a sumptuous feast. For the dining-hall an enormous barrel is specially built, as being emblematical of the town's dependence upon the vine, and in this the mayor bids the beggars welcome, and invites them to partake of the banquet. All the expenses are paid by the town.

CONUNDRUMS.

Why would a complaint from a chicken be an insult? Because it would be fowl language.

Why is an orange like a church steeple? Because we have a peel from it.

When are sheep like note paper? When folded.

Why do carpenters believe there is no such thing as stone? Because they never saw it.

What table has not a leg to stand upon? The multiplication table.

Where did Noah strike the first nail in the ark? On its head.

Why would some snakes make good story-tellers? Because they get off a rattling good thing in the shape of a tail.

I'll tell you something that will tickle you. What? A feather.

Why is an elephant like an oyster? Because neither can climb a tree.

Does any word contain all the vowels? Unquestionably.

When can a moth grind corn? When he is a miller.

Why are unprotected grates like insolent beggars? Because they are destitute offenders.

A vessel reversed will give the highest point, and a child's toy. Pot—top.

Why is a leaf of a tree like the human body? Because it has veins in it.

What is that which is lengthened by being cut at both ends? A ditch.

What pudding makes the best cricketer? A good batter.

Tom went out, his dog with him; he went not before, behind, nor on one side of him, then where did he go? On the other side.

What is always in fashion? The letter F.

What is the difference between a popgun and a hired costume? One is fired and does not hit. The other is hired and does not fit.

Why is the letter N like a faithless lover? Because it is in constant.

Why is an actress like an angel? Because we seldom see one that is not painted.

When is a fowl's neck like a bell? When it is wrung for dinner.

What is the difference between an auction and seasickness? One is the sale of effects, the other the effects of a sail.

How long can a goose stand on one leg? Try it and see.

Why is the letter A like twelve o'clock? Because it comes in the middle of day.

How does a sailor know there is a man in the moon? Because he has been to sea.

Why is a wick of candle like Athens? Because it is in grease (Greece).

When is a baby not a baby? When it is a little cross.

Why is a crow a brave bird? Because he never shows the white feather.

When are your eyes not eyes? When the wind makes them water.

When is a soldier not half a soldier? When he's in quarters.

Mr. Bigger, Mrs. Bigger and Baby Bigger, which of this interesting family is the biggest, and why the biggest? Baby Bigger, because he is a little Bigger.

SANTA CLAUS' ARRIVAL.

Holiday Dishes

Icing.—Put one pound of marshmallows in a double boiler with a little water, add a large cupful of mixed nut meats chopped, some chipped crystallized fruits, and add enough orange juice to spread. Cover the outside with plain boiled icing.

Plum Pudding Sauce.—Cream half a pound of butter with three-fourths of sugar and the beaten yolk of an egg; simmer for a few moments over a slow fire, stirring constantly; then add a glass of melted jelly, turn into a sauce bowl, grate a little nutmeg.

Creamed Lobster.—Chop one pound of boiled lobster meat (canned will do), rather coarse; boil one quart of milk and stir in four well-pounded or rolled crackers, then add the lobster; season with salt, butter and pepper, boil up once and serve; add chopped onion if liked, but it is rich enough without.

Eggs and Tomatoes.—Chop finely two ounces of smoked dried beef, freed from fat and outside skin. Add one cupful of tomatoes, one-quarter cupful of grated cheese, a few drops of onion juice, and a little cayenne pepper. Melt two tablespoonfuls of butter, add mixture, and when heated add three eggs slightly beaten. Cook until a creamy consistency, stirring constantly and scraping from bottom of pan.

Beef a la Iroquois.—Two cupfuls of finely chopped cooked meat, two tablespoonfuls of butter, one small onion, one cupful of tomato, two tablespoonfuls flour, one cupful of stock, salt and pepper to taste. Melt and brown the butter, add the onion, sliced, and cook until a delicate brown. Add the flour and brown, stirring all the time, then add the meat. Add the stock and tomatoes and cook until thoroughly heated. Serve on a hot dish garnished with toast.

Confection Cake. — One-third cake of chocolate, one-half cupful of butter, one cupful of sour milk or cream, two eggs, two and one-half cupfuls of flour, a small half teaspoonful of baking soda stirred into one-half cupful of warm water, in which is also dissolved two cupfuls of grated maple sugar. Cream the butter, add the unseparated eggs, add the chocolate melted over a pan of hot water. the flour to which has been added a teaspoonful of baking powder, and the maple sugar and the soda. Bake in layers.

Asparagus on Toast.—Use large-sized white asparagus. Rinse well in cold water to remove all grit. Tie the stalks together loosely so that they may be lifted out easily when cooked. Pour over the asparagus about a quart of boiling water, salted, and cook gently for twenty minutes. Lay the stalks on a platter with the heads resting on well toasted slices of white bread. Make a sauce of a teaspoonful of butter, one of flour, salt, pepper and a third of a cupful of water in which the asparagus was cooked. Cook for a few minutes and pour over.

New Century Plum Pudding—For New Century plum pudding take one-half cupful each of butter and sugar, three eggs well beaten, two cupfuls of flour, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one and one-fourth cupfuls of milk, and one cupful of raisins, chopped fine. Cream the butter and sugar, add the eggs, gradually sift the flour and baking powder together, and add, alternately with the milk. Add the raisins last, and bake in gem tins in a moderate oven. Serve with any good, rich sauce, preferably wine or brandy sauce.

Virginia Walnut Cake.—To one pint of the nuts, measured after they are shelled, allow one cupful of sugar, one-half cupful of butter, three eggs and a pinch of salt, one-fourth cupful of sweet milk with flour enough to make a dough. Beat the butter to a cream, and mix thoroughly with the sugar. Next add the well-beaten eggs, the milk and the salt with a little of the flour. Then the nuts, which have been shelled and passed through the meat chopper, and, last, the remaining flour. Roll out lightly, cut into shapes, sprinkle with granulated sugar and bake in a moderately hot oven.

Princes Pudding.—Decorate a mold or little cups with lemon jelly. Make a custard with a pint of milk, three yolks of eggs and a little sugar and vanilla essence. When the custard is thick, dissolve in it half an ounce of gelatine, which should have been soaked for an hour in just enough milk to cover it. Strain the liquid, then add the whites of the three eggs beaten to a stiff froth, just shaking them in lightly until thoroughly mixed. Pour this carefully into the molds and leave until set, then turn out carefully on a glass dish and put a little chopped jelly or a few spoonfuls of jam around it.

Orange Ginger Bread.—Heat together in a saucepan seven-eighths of a pound of molasses and three-eighths of a pound of butter. When warm enough to blend thoroughly add three-eighths of a pound of brown sugar, a quarter of a pound of candied orange peel cut fine, a pound and an eighth of flour. Work well together and put away in a cool place over night. Roll out thin on a floured board, cut in circles or small squares, and lay an inch apart in greased tins. Mix the yolk of an egg with half a cupful of milk and brush over the top of each piece with it. Bake in a moderate oven and as soon as taken out wash again with the egg mixture.

Sand Tarts.—Beat half a pound of butter to a cream and add half a pound of granulated sugar; then add the yolks of three eggs and the whites of two, beaten together; add a teaspoonful of vanilla and just a little grated nutmeg. Mix in sufficient flour to make a dough. Dust your baking board thickly with granulated sugar. Take out a piece of dough, roll into a thin sheet, cut with round cutters, and bake in a moderate oven until a light brown. Dust the top of the sheet with sugar instead of flour, to prevent the roller from sticking. By adding half a pound of clean currants to the above recipe you will have Shrewsbury currant cakes.

Devonshire Plum Pudding.—One pound of fresh beef suet shredded fine and free from strings and skin, one pound of seeded raisins chopped fine, the same of cleaned currants, one-fourth pound of shredded candied citron, one ounce each of candied lemon peel cut into thin strips, two ounces of almonds cut into bits, one teaspoonful each of ground cinnamon and ground cloves, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one of grated nutmeg, one-half pound each of sweet butter and granulated sugar, six eggs, one pint of sweet milk, the juice of two oranges and one lemon, and one and one-half pounds of flour. Mix the fruit and dredge two teaspoonfuls of baking powder with sifted flour; then add the chopped suet and mix again; in another bowl cream the butter and sugar; add to this mixture the egg yolks beaten smooth and light, the milk, and when the whole has been well mixed, stir in the stiff whites of the eggs alternately with the sifted flour. Beat light, then add the spices, the fruit juices; then add the fruit mixture and, with the hands, work into a compact mass. Have the pudding mould well greased with butter and steam from four to eight hours.

THE CHILDREN AT THE GATE.

Behold the children at the gate;
All patient for your loves they wait;
The cold winds toss their tresses sweet,
The snows are spread before their feet.
Have ye no kindly words or arts
To win, and warm them in your hearts?

There, where each face expectant is,
Are lips that keep for thee thy kiss;
Are lips that in the afterwhile
Shall light thy pathway with a smile.
The night is cold; shalt these abide
Safe at thy heart's warm fireside?

Behold the children at thy gate,
And hasten! for they weep and wait;
The wind its icy vengeance wreaks—
The blind snows pelt their pallid cheeks.
Hasten—for one day they shall rest
Folded unto the Christ, His breast!

CHRISTMAS DON'TS.

Don't leave the cost mark on presents.

Don't let money dominate your Christmas giving.

Don't let Christmas giving deteriorate into a trade.

Don't embarrass yourself by giving more than you can afford.

Don't try to pay debts or return obligations in your Christmas giving.

Don't give trashy things. Many an attic could tell strange stories about Christmas presents.

Don't make presents which your friends will not know what to do with, and which would merely encumber the home.

Don't give because others expect you to. Give because you love to. If you cannot send your heart with the gift, keep the gift.

Don't give too bulky articles to people who live in small quarters, unless you know that they need the particular things you send them.

Don't wait until the last minute to buy your presents, and then, for lack of time to make proper selections, give what your better judgment condemns.

Don't decide to abstain from giving just because you cannot afford expensive presents. The thoughtfulness of your gift, the interest you take in those to whom you give, are the principal things. The intrinsic value of your gift counts very little.

Don't give things because they are cheap and make a big show for the money. As a rule it is a dangerous thing to pick up a lot of all sorts of things at bargain sales for Christmas presents. If you do, there is always the temptation to make inappropriate gifts. Besides there is usually some defect in bargain articles, or they are out of style, out of date, or there is some other reason why they are sold under price.