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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, November 2, 1931.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "A Dinner from India." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A. Special information from "The Khaki Kook Book" by Mary Core.

Bulletins available: "Lamb As You Like It."

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"When it comes to making delicious dishes out of almost nothing, no one can compare with a good cook from Calcutta or Bombay," said the lady who had just returned from India. "Such curries, such flaky rice, such good cakes of native bread, and such delicious desserts of mangoes, fresh coconuts, bananas or citrus fruits."

"I've always wondered--" said Cousin Susan, "I've always wanted to know what the kitchens in India were like."

Our visitor smiled. "Well, they aren't at all like the kitchen in this house. There is no attractive linoleum-covered floor, no electric or gas range, shining enamel sinks, modern plumbing, convenient cupboards and so on. No, indeed. The Indian cookhouse is a separate building from the main house and is a very primitive affair with its uneven floor, its lack of sink and running water, and its brick and plaster cooking place where charcoal is burned behind a grate. All the work requiring water is done by the natives on the floor near the drainpipe. No modern labor saving devices for cooks on the road to Mandalay."

"Mercy sakes," Cousin Susan. "Just imagine. You must be happy to be back in your own country where you can have good American food again."

Our visitor smiled again. "It may sound surprising, but out in those smoky cookhouses, our Hindu cooks prepare the best food anyone ever ate. And, as I told you, the dishes they prepare are often made on a very stinted allowance of material. They take great pride in their cooking, in having everything they make cooked and seasoned to perfection. And they are not unclean either, as you might suppose. Their kitchens are just mildly disordered and unmodernized, but they are clean and so is the food coming out of them. To be quite frank, American food isn't in it with the best food of Hindustan."

Cousin Susan shook her head. She couldn't believe that those foreign concoctions could ever taste as good, for instance, as apple pie or Boston beans and brown bread.

So the lady from India invited us to her house for a Hindustani meal. Of course, she said, the food couldn't be prepared exactly as it would be in India. It had to be adapted to American kitchens and cooking utensils



and to the supplies available at American grocery stores. But she promised us that it would be as nearly authentic as possible and that we would enjoy it.

We did. Even Cousin Susan took two helpings of curry. And I thought that every dish on the menu was too good to be forgotten. So I went straight home after dinner and put down on paper everything the lady from India told me about how to prepare these different dishes.

Whom do you suppose I had in mind as I wrote? I'll tell you. I was thinking of my radio friends. One of these days when you are having company and want to serve them an interesting, different dinner--and an inexpensive one at that-- why not serve an East Indian meal?

There is a wide variety of dishes to select from when you make up your menu. Of course, you'll start with a curried dish. India curry--hot, spicy, easy to prepare and inexpensive. Then you'll have rice to serve with it. Then perhaps one of those vegetable dishes which the Hindus call "bujas." Some tart chutney or pickles. Some flat cakes of native whole-grain bread. And a dessert made with banana, orange or any of the citrus fruits or mangoes, if you can find them in the market.

Curry is a favorite dish not only of India but of all tropical countries--a hot main dish of spiced meat or vegetables. Curries provide a good way to use left-over meat as well as inexpensive fresh cuts of meat. This should interest people who are budgeting their food costs. The heel or round of beef, or the breast or neck of lamb will make just as good a curry as one of the more expensive cuts. Fresh or cooked pork makes delicious curries, especially if combined with tart apples or green tomatoes. So do eggs, chicken and fish, either fresh or canned. The Hindus, of course, eat vegetable curry, because they are vegetarians, but the Mohammedans in India are great meat eaters.

Curry is an old dish, even in the Orient. In India this method of preparing foods has been used since 1500 years before Christ. The curry powder itself, from which the dish takes its name, may be bought in this country ready-prepared by the bottle. In India the powder is mixed in the native way by grinding the spices together between stones. Some of the ingredients of curry powder are familiar stand-bys in American kitchens--onion, garlic, black peppercorns, turmeric, and caraway seeds--but dried hot chili peppers, coriander seeds and green ginger are not so well known.

The inevitable and everlasting onion, our visitor told us, is used in a hundred ways in India. It is always used in curries, cooked until perfectly soft so that its pulp makes the gravy thick.

The rice served with curry in India is a fluffy mass of separate grains, never the gummy, tasteless mass that sometimes results from careless cooking. The Hindus used unpolished rice which has a creamy rather than a pure white tinge.

A chutney or some other form of Indian pickles usually is served along with the rice and curry. True Indian chutney is made with mangoes, but other tart fruits may be used. The Recipe Lady has a delicious recipe for apple

chutney which I shall give you today, as soon as we write down the menu and the directions for lamb curry.

The menu for an East Indian dinner: Curried Lamb; Rice; Apple chutney; Cabbage bujea; Baked Bananas; and Orange marmalade.

Like Chinese food and the food of other Oriental countries, most of the food is chopped or cut in very fine pieces.

Are you ready for the recipe for lamb curry or curried lamb--which-ever you prefer to call it? It is to be found on the back page of the lamb leaflet--yes, page eight, the very last recipe in the leaflet. But for those who want to have an East Indian dinner and haven't yet received their lamb leaflet, I'll give the recipe.

3 cups of chopped, cooked lean lamb	1/8 teaspoon of curry
1 and 1/2 cups of chopped celery and tops	3 dashes of tabasco, and
1 medium sized onion, chopped	Salt.
3/4 cup of brown gravy or broth	
3 tablespoons of butter or other fat	

That makes 8 ingredients. I'll repeat them. (Repeat.)

Cook the celery and the onion in the butter. Add the meat, gravy and seasonings. Stir until well mixed and hot. If the mixture is too dry, add one-half cup of boiling water. Serve the curried lamb with a border of flaky boiled rice, garnished with parsley.

The native way of preparing cabbage bujea is to fry some sliced onion until a nice golden brown, then to add chopped cabbage and green pepper and then some lightly salted, boiling water. Simmer until the vegetables are tender.

If you are in doubt as to how to cook plain boiled rice so that it will be flaky and fluffy with each grain separate from the rest, consult page 58 of the green cookbook. Excellent directions there.

Quite a long list of ingredients for apple chutney. Fourteen, in fact. We'll have just about time to put that recipe down before we stop.

3 quarts chopped apples	2 pounds sultana raisins
3 lemons	1 tablespoon ground ginger
2 chili peppers	1 teaspoon paprika
1 quart brown sugar	1 teaspoon salt
1 quart cider vinegar	1 onion chopped
1 quart dates, stoned and chopped	Garlic
1 pint tarragon vinegar	2 small cloves

Shall I repeat those ingredients? (Repeat.)

Wash, pare, and core the apples. Chop them with the lemons, as the acid will help to keep the apples from turning dark. Remove the seeds from the chili peppers. Mix all the ingredients. Boil gently until the apples

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are soft and stir the mixture occasionally with a fork. Bottle the chutney while hot and seal.

Tomorrow: Some facts about house mice.

Wednesday, I'll give a fine new recipe for caramel apples on a stick. Just the thing for Junior's birthday party.

