

PUMPKINS.

This kind of gourd is well known in this country and is generally raised quite as much if not more as food for cattle than for man; but in many countries it forms the principal part of the food of the poorer classes and is also used by the wealthy and is served not only in pies as we are accustomed to see it, but in soups or fried in oil or butter. The name was originally pumpkin, then pumpkin, and so corrupted to its present form. Everything of the gourd kind is of a watery nature, so are useful for cooling the system; hence they are excellent to serve as an antidote for the greasy foods we need in the winter season. There are many varieties of pumpkin, and squash; as a rule the hard shell kinds are richer and will keep longer. If fully ripe and put in a cool dry place, they will keep nearly through the winter. It is recommended to use the stem over with sealing wax and hang away in a bag.

Pumpkins may be preserved for future use in various shapes; they may be canned like other fruits and vegetables, but are not entirely safe from fermentation, though if well cooked with molasses and sugar there will be little danger of that. After the pumpkin is stewed, spread plates, dry away in a moderate oven; when perfectly dry, roll up, put away in a dry place. When wanted for use soak over night in milk. Pumpkin may also be cut and served without cooking. For water use, several pumpkins can be soaked and sliced at one time and then frozen, kept in a cold place, and used up as needed.

This is what a lady said of this method in the *Maine Farmer*, some time ago: "I have tried many methods of preserving pumpkins for winter use, and I have never found any so good as the way I prepare them now, and have for ten years past. The pumpkins for winter I keep in just as cool and dry a place as possible, and when I wish to freeze remove them to the cellar, and just as soon as the weather is cool enough to freeze the pumpkins, as fast as I can I slice it, cutting it fine, and after it is sliced take a large mixing bowl and jam them, and set it in tin pans to freeze, and when solid, slip it out and pack in a large butter tin, as I like this best to put it in. In this way it will keep all winter if kept in a cold place, and when wanted, you can cut with a chopping knife, or an axe, what you would want, put in a tin pan and set it over a kettle of hot water, and when thawed it is ready for use. Try it once, and I do not think you will ever try any other way of keeping pumpkins for winter use."

A preparation of pumpkin to be found at groceries, is pumpkin flour, and this will make a fairly good pie when nothing better is at hand.

Pumpkin Pie.—The secret of having good pumpkin pies is to have the pumpkin properly cooked—don't expect to do this after the crust is ready; better begin the day before.

Pare the pumpkin, unless a very hard shell, remove the seeds, cut in small pieces, and cook with as little water as will keep from burning. When done, cool and sift through a colander, put back over the fire where it will cook slowly and leave uncovered so it will dry away; when nearly done, add some molasses and a little spice.

It should be rich and red when done, and not watery. By this preparation, pies can be made with no eggs, skim-milk and sweetened with molasses, quite equal to those of richer compositions.

If eggs are scarce or milk thin, a spoonful of powdered cracker crumbs or flour can be used.

Here is a good rule:—Take three eggs to two pies, if eggs are plenty two to each, a cup of stewed pumpkin to each pie, milk to this, a pint or more—enough to fill a good sized deep plate—season with ginger, sweeten with molasses or brown sugar.

The more eggs used, the less pumpkin needed. Cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg, one or all, are the usual spices; some like little clove, and one recipe says caraway was the old favorite.

Bake until a rich brown in a moderate oven. It is well to have the mixture before filling the pie plates.

Besides the time-honored pie, this vegetable may be used in many other compounds not usually thought of.

It is as useful as potato as a foundation for bread, etc., making a soft spongy dough. A little pumpkin is a great addition to a Johnny-cake, softening the natural freshness of the meal; and squash and pumpkin are a good foundation for bread muffins or biscuits.

A much esteemed dish for supper in the winter time was pumpkin and milk; a cover was put on a hard shell pumpkin, like a jack-o'-lantern, scrape out the seeds clean, and fill with milk, put on the cover and bake till soft. When done, scrape the pumpkin into the milk and eat.

PUMPKIN SOUP. Peel the pumpkin and cut in pieces, take away the seeds. Boil in boiling water till soft, add to the pulp through a strainer. Mix a little of butter with a wine-glass of milk, add to the soup when passed through the strainer, with salt and pepper to taste, and a pinch of flour. Let it simmer for fifteen minutes, thicken with the juice of an egg and serve.

PUMPKIN WITH CHEESE. Peel, slice and stew a pumpkin; sprinkle with salt; try it in two ounces of butter, grate cheese over it, add a little butter and brown.

PRESERVED PUMPKIN. Take a nice pumpkin, pare, take out the seeds, cut in nice slices. To each pound slice one pound sugar, one gill lemon juice, put the slices in a deep dish in layers with sugar sprinkled between them. Pour the lemon juice over the top and let the whole remain for two or three days; boil all together until the pumpkin is tender, adding one-half pint of water for every three pounds of sugar. Turn into a jar when done, and let it stand a while, then drain off the syrup and boil until quite thick, and skim and pour boiling water over the pumpkin.

A little ginger or lemon peel may be added in the syrup to flavor it.

Nearly all these recipes are as suitable for squash as pumpkin.

PUMPKIN SQUARES. Pare squash and cut in this slice, dip in a little butter of flour and water. Lay in a frying pan in hot butter and bake, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Fry brown on both sides.

The Oxford Democrat.

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HOPE DEAR TO LIFE.

Who would part with Hope sweet Hope! From that red glow of dawn, Till the sun's departing glory glows, Foretells a more radiant morn.

Even with our first weak steps, Upon the world's broad stage, Our childish tears are beguiled to smiles, In coming joys our thoughts engage.

And yet in the dewy morn of life, Hope calls the buds most fair, The wreaths of love and purity, To twine in childhood's hair.

And as the day advances, The buds but yet half-blown, The wreaths around the brow of youth, And claims him for his own.

Bright are her robes in her own, In youth's "fair girl's" story, When darkness breaks—ah, sweet this friend! 'Till sunshine breaks the clouds once more,

Good courage crown her quivering brow, Glad smiles dispel all fear, And in the light to unveil, Come whispered words of cheer.

And as the sunbeams lengthen, For down they shadowy glide, She weaves for age bright garlands of flowers that never fade.

Even till our last weak steps, Shall end life's changeful day, Not rough can be the path we tread, Where Hope, sweet Hope has cleared the way.

Oh, who would part with a friend so dear, From that first glow of dawn, Till the sunset of life's waning day, Foretells a heavenly morn.

From the Banner, AN AUTUMN WIND.

By OLIVE E. DANA.

From some dim cloudland in the west, A gentle wind is blowing, And every place it breathes upon Is somehow fairer growing.

It sings a tender requiem For the departed summer, It sings a welcome, sweet and true, To autumn, the new comer.

It scatters all the brooding heats, And soothes to dreamy languor, And the low lying thunder-clouds, All resolve with anger.

It sings a welcome, sweet and true, To autumn, the new comer, And warns and bids the light that falls Upon its path, in blessing.

It leaves a falling film of frost Upon the shimmering grasses, It sets the stars and twinkles all, A blushing, where it passes.

It gives the verdure deeper tints, The fruit a finer flavor, It starts the sleepy crocus into bloom, With neither fear nor favor.

It rustles in the bending corn, And seems to linger proudly In harvest fields, where 'neath the sheaves, It whispers long and loudly.

Over forest smitten spots it sighs, In play and in lament, The tender life it whistles o'er, And rapturous songs are ringing.

And lower, fuller, as the brooks Beside the quiet river— They mingle with the covert hymns That thank the gracious giver.

And many a brave and cheery sound This welcome wind is bringing, From woods and fields the harvest horns, And rapturous songs are ringing.

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desired it anyway, so perhaps it is just as well." But it was her own idea—the wearing of those badges of black which seemed to give some outward recognition of their bereavement, and the others fell in with her.

They were assembled in the sitting-room that sunny summer day. It was a small room, and very properly, since the furniture, being of the most meager description, might have been quite lost in a larger apartment. But the curtains, the metamorphosis of a muslin gown an anciently belonging to Miss Abigail, the eldest of the seven, blew arily out from the windows in at which the climbing roses peeped; the little old-fashioned fire place was filled with branches of evergreen held up by a pair of brass andirons polished to resplendency; and there were various dainty devices formed of pressed fern and autumn leaves, together with a great many little connoisseurs (else they would scarcely have found a place there) feminine knick-knacks disposed about the room, really redeeming it from the poor, comfortless appearance which it must otherwise have presented.

There had been a silence of some minutes, following Miss Abigail's declaration that "something must be done at it." It was broken presently by Bessie, the youngest of the family, a bright little maiden in the first of her teens with a decided talent for music.

"If—if papa's salary could go on, we might do just as we have."

"My dear Bessie," said Angelina, with the not unusual touch of sarcasm in her tones, "do be as sensible as possible. There is no if in the matter."

Angelina was the second Miss Pettibone, and she had long since turned the first "old maid's corner," as Bessie expressed herself. She stood beside Abigail, now Abigail was short and brown, with snapping black eyes, and hair in which threads of grey were beginning to show. Angelina was tall and blonde, with a certain thinness of form and voice which gave fair promise of sharpening into angularity and sourness.

Bessie's brow contracted and there were signs of an approaching storm: Nannie put an arm around her. "Never mind, Bessie," she whispered; and just then Miss Abigail cleared her throat to speak.

"Deacon Parmalee has offered me the school at Four Corners, for a year," she said. "The salary is very small. I can manage nicely for myself, but—"

"You can't help support the rest of us," said Angelina, with no small degree of acerbity. "Well, it is each one for himself, as the children say. I shall marry Mr. Briggs."

For an instant there was a shocked stillness, like the lull which precedes a tempest; and then the chorus of expostulations began:

"O, Angie!"

"That old widower!"

"And those six children!"

"I wouldn't Angelina," said the eldest sister, shortly.

"No! I presume not," retorted Angelina. "Neither would a certain quasi-historical personage, commonly denominated Jack, partake of his evening meal, Abbie."

Miss Abigail though she reddened, smiled a little contemptuously. "Well, you must please yourself," said she. "We must all do what we think is for the best."

"What?" asked Mrs. Comstock, glancing up; she was shelling early peas in the porch, and her fingers kept on with the work while her eyes looked at her husband and her ears listened for what he had to say. "What's a beatin' nater, now?"

"In the first place, to begin with, such a family as Aaron Pettibone had!"

Mrs. Comstock laughed, that mellow shaking laugh peculiar to very stout people, until the tin in her lap danced a merry jig from sheer sympathy. Upon the occasion of each successive birth in the Pettibone family Uncle Ephraim had made the same remark; it had nothing of novelty for his wife, yet she laughed.

"I've heard you say that afore, Ephraim."

"Wal, it's true 'nough to be said again," was the rejoinder. "Tis a ter'ble family, seven on 'em an' all gals; an' not a boy to kinder keep the name when Aaron's gone, as he is now, poor man. Time was when the Pettibones was as populous as any family in the county. I do say it goes again nater, Betsy, an' laugh of you want to!"

Betsy smiled into her pan of peas. "I'm a thinking some of them Pettibone gals 'bout her a great sight of trouble 'bout keepin' the name," she remarked.

"Wal, whatever they're agin' to do's more'n I know," pursued Mrs. Comstock, meditatively snapping a pea-Fod and shelling its contents into his capacious mouth. "They're got the house, such as it is, an' half a acre of ground; but that won't feed 'em 'clothes seven on 'em—all gals! Now, there was a boy—"

"Which there ain't," interrupted Mrs. Comstock. "An' mebbe it's a good thing. Only sons ain't most dependence; bein' too fond of themselves."

Meanwhile, in the small, no-colored dwelling, which, with the half-acre of land comprised Aaron Pettibone's sole legacy to his daughters the seven Misses Pettibone were discussing ways and means; though, to be sure, there was very little choice of ways, and no means to speak of. They were all alone in the world now, since the death of their father a fortnight before; the mother having died a year or more previously. Each one of them were a tiny knot of craps in her hair. "We haven't money, we can't afford to buy mourning," Nannie, the fifth Miss Pettibone had explained to Mrs. Deacon Parmalee, a neighbor. "There are so many of us, you know; I'm not sure that papa would have

"There'll be so many, you know, Angie. I'd rather—O, dear! I'd rather take care of Mrs. Davidson's baby."

"And we must get Jeannette boarded in as pleasant and inexpensive a place as possible," continued Miss Abigail; "and each one of us must put by something for her living. The rent of the cottage can go towards that, too. It is the only way I can see at present. I haven't thought much about home, because,"—she turned to her younger sister—"I know she is so willing and capable that more than one home will be open to her."

Nannie dropped a smiling little courtesy, though her eyes were misty with unshed tears. She was but seventeen years old, this fifth Miss Pettibone, a plump, brown-eyed girl, with round cheeks, full red lips and a pleasant voice, which her father had likened to the singing of a brook.

"You might turn story-writer, too," said Gertrude. "Everybody said your school compositions were splendid."

"It isn't of course that I could earn my bread and butter by writing for the story paper," returned Nannie, brightly. She paused a moment. "Abbie, will you give me the rent of the place for Jeannette's board?"

"No one would take her for that."

"I would," Nannie's full lips closed determinedly. "And I will. Poor little Jean; it would nearly kill her to go away among strangers. And Bessie shall stay, too," she went on hastily, as if she feared an opposing interruption; and there shall be a home here for you all whenever you choose to come to it."

The four older sisters were breathless with astonishment; but Jeannette's eyes glowed with a little pirouette in the corner of the room. Nannie herself looked every inch capable of bearing up, at least, the whole world on her shoulders.

"But how?" asked Miss Abigail, recovering herself.

"Dr. Greenlan is going abroad," said Nannie, speaking very distinctly, "and he wants to let or let his spary of twenty-five hives; I shall take them—that is one thing. Then I shall turn our half-acre of land into a strawberry patch—all but enough to rise our own vegetables on—and I shall send the strawberries to market—that is another thing."

"It is too late for strawberries," said Angelina, "and the bees will sting you." "You're a regular Job's comforter," returned Nannie with a half-sylphified little laugh. "I will prepare the ground and set my vines this summer and fall; and Dr. Greenlan says he will show me about managing the bees. In the meantime before my income begins to come in," Nannie laughed, "I will manage some way, never fear. Perhaps I may even borrow Mrs. Johnson's sign."

There was the light of an earnest purpose in Nannie's eyes, and a look of determination on her bright face quite at variance with her playful tone and the badinage she uttered.

"You're a trump, Nannie Pettibone," said the tall Gertrude with more force than elegance; "and the rest of us are selfish nobs. If that three dollars went towards it, I'll pull it in two."

"Don't," said Nannie merrily; but a loving presently gave Gertrude's hand a squeeze under cover of her ruffled apron.

"It is only that you didn't see quite as I do," said she. "I believe I've been thinking of this ever since papa died—and even before; for I asked him one day if I might not try the strawberries and so perhaps help him a little, poor papa! But he laughed and kissed me and smoothed my hair. Nanny's eyes grew humid, and asked me if I didn't get better enough on my bread."

"But suppose you fail," queried Angelina, returning to the subject.

"Then I shall know I tried," said Nannie briefly.

"But I shall not. I haven't very large eyes, Angie; I expect a great many drawbacks—at first, but I have counted costs many a night as I lay thinking it over, and I am very sure we could live, Jeanie and Bess and I, with economy and not too much plum pudding, on one hundred dollars for a year; and Dr. Greenlan tells me he received more than twice that sum from the sale of swarms and honey last year."

"It wasn't a good year for bees, either," cried the irrepressible Gertrude.

"And more," went on Nannie, "there will be a home here as there always has been."

"Bless you, Nannie," said Miss Abigail, wiping her eyes faintly; but she found a great deal to say against the project before she finally consented to it.

There were drawbacks, Nannie found. It was no slight task—that which she had taken upon herself; and sometimes she almost lost courage. The house was very lonely when Abigail had gone to her school; Gertrude and Bertha to Scoville; and Angelina had assumed charge of Mr. Briggs and his household—an event which shortly happened. But she found plenty of employment for herself and the neighbors were very kind and took much interest in having her little venture prove a success; and a great deal of plain sewing found its way to the cottage which might perhaps have been done as well and expeditiously at home. Deacon Parmalee, too, who kept the corner store, and whose eyes were falling him unaccountably, sent her a good many odd bits of copying to do—for Nannie wrote a large, round hand quite unlike the slim, angular chirography now so fashionable.

"Not for Joseph—Briggs!" Bessie flashed, adding the last word hastily as she caught Nannie's disapproving glance.

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own pot-hooks when I can get such other," and he paid her well.

So they lived the summer, these three, in the little non-colored house; and Bessie did not give up her lessons nor practice. The bees were assiduously looked after, and Nannie soon became very expert in the care of these tiny, intelligent creatures. It must have been, as Gertrude would have expressed it, a good year for bees; for when autumn came Nannie's stock had more than doubled, and the whole number of swarms had made a large amount of honey. The autumn brought Miss Abigail home to spend a vacation; Gertrude and Bertha came to for a little season of rest from their work, and Nannie's face beamed with pleasure and gratified pride, as she went over to them all the account of her summer's work.

"I have sold fifteen swarms at ten dollars apiece," said she; "and Deacon Parmalee will take three hundred pounds of honey at twenty-five cents a pound. And the strawberries—Squire Bartlett gave me all the cuttings I had a mind to take, since he would throw them away, and Bessie and I put them out with scarcely any cost except of time. Jeannette—well, I shall not tell what Jeannette is doing. O girls! O Abbie! I am so happy, and proud, and everything! If I can do half as well next year I shall be—almost satisfied; though I'm afraid I shall run ahead of my hundred dollar limit. And don't think I forget to be glad that Bertha has got a story accepted; and that Abbie's scholars love her dearly, and that Gertrude can play the goose even more dexterously than the tailor himself. I am glad for all, not excepting Angie, for I do think she enjoys marshalling her eight little Brigades at home and abroad."

It was four years after this, and not long ago, when Uncle Ephraim Comstock, depositing two brimming pails of milk upon the dairy table as he spoke, said: "It does beat all nater, too, to see that little Nannie Pettibone goin' 'mongst her bees. She's got risin' a hundred hives, cooies she calls 'em, now, an' it takes 'bout all her time to tend to 'em. I was by this afternoon, an' I declare for't, ef I hadn't a seen the place for a year, I wouldn't ha' known it. She's bought the two-acre lot 'jine' her'n, Miss Nannie has, an' sowed it to alfalfa for a bee pasture, an' it's just a hummin' with 'em. She says she has considerable many swarms 'las' winter, but she don't mean to do it agin. I tell ye, Betsy, it's wonderfule; an' she no more afeard of their needle-pints than nothing at all. Seems as if they know her an' never think of stingin'." She says 'tis because she aint no ways afeard on 'em. An' her strawberry patch is good for sore eyes, now I tell ye."

"Them gals' peas to slide along easy-like, too," observed Mrs. Comstock, carefully lifting her milk pans into the screen. "There's Gertrude, she's married considerable well down to Scoville, an' Bertha lives long o' her—she's dabbled in ink, mostly, I've heard say. An' Abigail's hum now."

"Yes," answered Ephraim, "an' she's a goin' to stop to hum from this out, bein' they've sent 'Elizabeth to Boston to some new fangled kind of music college. An' that lame one o' em's ears her keepin' in, paintin' posies and birds, on fans an' such things. Lord bless ye, but she'll paint a bunch o' bachelor buttons so 'at ye'd a'most think ye'd pick 'em up. Deacon Parmalee says it's a wonderfule talent. He's as proud o' them gals as ef they was his'n."

"Twas all Nannie's doin's," was the reply, "Jeannette's got a talent to paint, to be sure, but 'twas hid in a napkin, so to speak; till Nannie found it out, and undone it."

"Yes," rejoined Ephraim, with a hearty thump of his fist upon the table; "she's a good gal is Nanny, an' smart as a whip to boot; an' I aint sorry to hear she's bespoken to young Squire Bartlett."

"Be'n 'enamored as good's a boy in to the family, aint she?" queried Betsy archly.

"Wal," Ephraim said, with a deliberate smile, and retreated towards the door. "I don't know's I hev any call to judge, bein' Aaron Pettibone didn't never hev no boy. But I'm free to say that Nann's doin' toler'ble well—for a gal!"

AN ECCENTRIC PREACHER.

ELDER HOOPER OF PARIS—TRADITIONS OF HIS QUEER WAYS.

(History of Paris.)

Our first settled minister was a man of strong convictions, of decided views, a despiser of shams and a persistent defender of his opinions. He was not only argumentative, but he could be terribly sarcastic, and sarcasm was a weapon he never hesitated to use when occasion required, whether against preacher or layman. After having preached to the society fifty years, Mr. Hooper notified its members that he should preach no longer. Before another minister was engaged, preachers from neighboring towns were called in to supply the pulpit, and Mr. Hooper always attended church. At one time a minister from Hebron was supplying the pulpit and preached a long, rambling and prosy sermon, occupying an hour and a half in its delivery. Elder Hooper was noted for his short sermons, rarely exceeding half an hour, and often not more than twenty minutes, and being present on this occasion he became very restive and impatient, and as soon as the "amen" was uttered from the pulpit, he arose and said in his inimitable way, "I give notice that there will be preaching in this church this afternoon by myself."

It happened on one occasion that Mr. Hooper had an appointment for an evening lecture at the house of Ezra Cary, who was himself a Congregationalist, though his son, Shepherd, was a Baptist. A Mr. Hillard, a missionary of the Congregationalist church, was present at Mr. Cary's, and Mr. Hooper on his arrival, noticing him in the room, asked: "Will you preach this evening, Mr. Hillard?" accompanying the expression with the characteristic remark: "My wife says she likes to go to a visiting sometimes, even if she don't get any better victuals than her own."

Mr. Hooper was a practical man. During the laying on, if there were signs of a shower, he often told his people from the pulpit that "if they had hay out, they had better go home and see to it;" sometimes he would accompany these words with the remark that he "had hay out which needed his attention," and would at once close the service and start for his home and farm.

After performing the marriage ceremony on a certain occasion where the prospects of the contracting parties were particularly promising, Elder Hooper said: "This is as it should be; first the house, then the wife and then the children; the order is too often reversed."

Elder Hooper

