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HESTER MARTHA И ДР.

SIX CUPS OF COFFEE

Helen Campbell
Six Cups of Coffee

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Six Cups of Coffee Prepared for Public Palate by the Best Authorities on Coffee Making

PREFACE

It is not much to say that nine-tenths of that decoction which passes under the name of coffee, is unworthy to be so called, and that many persons live and die without ever tasting a really good cup of that delicious beverage.

As a nation, the American people want the best of everything, and intend to have that best. Furthermore, they are very properly and intelligently eager to turn it to the greatest advantage. But what avails the best raw material if it be not prepared in such a manner as to develop and secure its subtle, delicate, volatile and enlivening qualities? The very same ingredients may be injurious and depressing, or wholesome and exhilarating, according to the way in which they are treated.

The six cups of coffee offered to the reader, by six of the foremost authorities regarding cooking, will bring a new and healthful stimulus to prepare that refreshing drink in a manner which shall leave nothing to be desired. They are not made from old grounds re-heated for the occasion, but are as fresh as the intelligence and the experience which have produced them.

A country which expends nearly thirty-five millions of dollars each year for the aromatic berry, can well afford to study the best methods of extracting its desirable qualities.

In those family circles where Good Housekeeping is the rule, not the exception, it is to be hoped that this little book will be welcomed as a useful friend and interesting companion.

COFFEE – I.

As Prepared By Maria Parloa

IN war times, after a battle or a long march, how the soldiers enjoyed their coffee! And in many cases it was pretty poor coffee, too, though to them it seemed fit for the gods. The delicious aroma which arose made their feelings of weariness or depression vanish for a while, and the beverage itself cheered them in a marked degree. Nothing could take its place; nothing can take its place to-day. The consumption of coffee in this country is enormous. Rich and poor alike must have it. But it is a common complaint that a cup of good coffee is the exception rather than the rule. Considering the low price of the raw material, this should not be the case. People are prone to think that they know all there is to be known about coffee, and do not take pains to learn what special qualities different brands possess, and what the most approved modes of making coffee are.

Time was when a Mexican or South or Central American coffee was considered an inferior article. To-day some of the best coffees come from these places. For example, one of the most delicious coffees which is brought into this country comes from Guatemala. It bears the name of "Las Nubes" (The Clouds), which it takes from the plantation where it is grown. There is an odd bit of history connected with this plantation. A Scotchman named Nelson owned it, and was coining money from it, when he was banished from the country by President Barrios, and his property was confiscated. It is now owned by the widow of Barrios. The annual yield from it is four hundred and fifty thousand pounds. A large proportion of this goes to England, where it brings a higher price than here.

There are two kinds of coffee, – the strong and the mild. To the first class belong the Rio and Santos, and to the second, the Java, Mocha, Maracaibo, and, indeed, almost all the other kinds. When a rich, smooth beverage is desired, a combination of Mocha and Java – or some coffee that has the qualities of Java – should be used; but when a very strong flavor is liked, Rio or Santos should be taken. The supply of Java meets only about one-fifth of the demand. For this reason many other mild coffees are sold under the name of "Java." Good Maracaibo is equal to Java, and is constantly sold under that name. A combination of one pound Mocha, one pound Rio, and two pounds Java or Maracaibo will give a rich, strong-flavored drink, but not so smooth as if the Rio were omitted.

When buying the berry, pause for a moment to think how you like your beverage. Do you want it smooth and of delicate flavor? Take one-third Mocha and the rest Java or Maracaibo. Do you want it strong? Use all Rio, or temper that brand by combining it with some one of the mild kinds.

A large proportion of housekeepers buy their coffee roasted, and many also buy it ground. If coffee, while still hot from the roaster, were put into vessels almost air tight, and kept in them until ground for use, the improvement in the drink made from it would amply repay for the trouble taken. Much of the fine aroma is lost before the roasted bean reaches the housekeeper, and there is even a greater loss if the coffee has been ground for a considerable time. These are some of the disadvantages which must be endured when one buys coffee already roasted. But, on the other hand, unless the roasting be done very carefully, the coffee will not be good. A few burnt beans in a quart will ruin the drink. When careful attention to roasting cannot be given at home, it will be better to buy a supply already roasted, but never ground. A French small mill, which can be regulated to grind coarse or fine, can be bought for about a dollar and a half. With care it will last for ten or twenty years. Some firms put up coffee in tin cans. It costs more, but retains so much of the aroma as to be well worth the extra price.

When green coffee is bought, be careful that it is well seasoned. It should have a brownish or yellowish tint, which comes only with years of seasoning. The best way to do, when it is possible, is

to buy green coffee by the sack, and keep it stored in a sweet, dry place – say the attic – for two or three years. In that time it will have become sufficiently mellowed.

To roast coffee, put the green beans into a large dripping-pan, being sure that the pan is perfectly clean. Have the coffee about an inch deep. Place the pan in a moderate oven. Stir frequently, and at the end of half an hour increase the heat of the oven. From this time until the beans are sufficiently browned, there should be a stirring every three or four minutes. When the coffee is almost a chestnut color, remove the pan from the oven, and for every quart add one tablespoonful of butter. Stir well; and, while the coffee is still hot, put it into cans and cover closely. Coffee absorbs moisture and odors. It should therefore be kept in a sweet, dry place.

There are so many ways of making coffee, and so many kinds of coffee-pots, that young housekeepers often are perplexed in choosing either a mode of preparing the drink or a utensil in which to make it. If a few principles be carefully observed, a perfect result may be counted as a certainty – provided, of course, that the ground coffee be good. The berries should be heated before or after grinding. The coffee-pot should be entirely clean, without a particle of old coffee grounds in it. The coffee should not be subjected to long boiling, as this will dissipate the aroma and produce a rather bitter drink. Coffee that is not boiled at all is very smooth and free of bitter flavor. All coffee should be served hot, and as soon as possible after being made. Always serve cream or hot milk with it. Heat the milk to the boiling point, but do not let it boil.

Tastes vary as to the proper strength of coffee. The rules given in this article are for a strong drink; and where only moderate strength is desired, use but half the quantity of dry coffee for the quantity of water stated. Coffee made with cold water always is stronger than that made with boiling water, and in the opinion of many people it is better; but some folks think that no coffee is equal to that which has been boiled with an egg. No matter what mode of making the drink is followed, the result will be pleasing if good material is used, the work done quickly, and the coffee served fresh and hot.

Here are four rules, any one of which will give perfect coffee, but each of a different flavor: —

Filtered Coffee Made with Cold Water

Put one cupful of fine-ground coffee in a small saucepan and on the fire. Stir constantly until hot. Put the hot coffee in the filter of a coffee-biggin. Place the coarse strainer on top, and then add half a cupful of cold water, pouring it in by tablespoonfuls. Cover it and let it stand for half an hour, though less time will do. Next add three cupfuls and a half of cold water, a cupful at a time. When all the water has passed through the filter, pour it from the pot, and again through the filter. Cover closely; and at serving-time heat it to the boiling point and serve at once.

One advantage in using cold filtered water is that the coffee may be made at any time in the day, and heated when required. If to be served after dinner, it will be better if made with three cupfuls of water instead of four.

This coffee will be perfectly clear, and of a fine color. The flavor will be rich, smooth and delightful.

Filtered Coffee Made with Boiling Water

Heat one cupful of fine-ground coffee in the manner described in the preceding receipt, and put it in the filter of the coffee-biggin. Put the biggin in a pan with a little boiling water, and place it on the stove. Pour a gill of boiling water on the coffee, cover, and let it stand for five minutes. At the end of that time add half a pint of boiling water, and continue to add boiling water by the half-pint, at intervals of three minutes, until a quart of water has been used in all. Serve the coffee at once. Or, the coffee may be passed through the filter a second time, giving a stronger cup.

Filtered coffee never should be boiled. Placing the pot in the pan of boiling water keeps the coffee at the boiling point, and yet protects it from a boiling.

Boiled Coffee Made with Cold Water

Heat a cupful of coffee, ground rather coarse, and put it in a bowl with one pint of cold water. Cover closely, and let it soak for an hour or more.

Break an egg into the bowl with the coffee, and stir well. Put this mixture into the coffee-pot and place on the fire. Heat slowly to the boiling point, then add a pint of boiling water, and boil gently for five minutes. Now add a gill of cold water, and set the pot back where its contents cannot boil. At the end of three minutes strain into a hot pot and serve at once.

This coffee will be stronger than that made with boiling water; its flavor, too, will be somewhat different.

Boiled Coffee Made with Boiling Water

Heat one cupful of coffee, ground rather coarse. Put it into a coffee-pot, and add an egg. Stir well, and add a quart of boiling water. Place over the fire, and stir until the coffee boils up. Now stir the coffee and egg down, and then shut down the cover, and set the pot where its contents will only simmer during the next five minutes. At the end of that time add a gill of cold water. Let the coffee stand at the side of the stove for three or four minutes, then strain into a hot pot, and serve at once.

The rules for making coffee might be multiplied almost indefinitely, but what has been given here will insure a good beverage every time.

COFFEE – II.

As Prepared by Marion Harland

THE *very* best way to make coffee is to buy the raw berries and brown them yourself, at least once a week. Most printed directions for preparing the beverage insist upon these preliminaries as a *sine qua non*. When the mistress cannot superintend the roasting, it is seldom well done, the coffee being burned or unequally cooked. Therefore, the average housewife, who has her hands full of "must-be-dones," reading that tolerable coffee cannot be had unless this rule be obeyed, makes up her mind to give her family a second-rate article. Should coffee be regarded as a daily necessity of existence by her and her household, she would do well to spare time from other occupations (if possible) to prepare it in the most approved manner.

To this end, purchase Java and Mocha in equal quantities; mix and roast them in a broad dripping-pan, shaking and stirring often, particularly when they begin to brown, turning the pan, end for end, several times during the operation. The berries should be evenly tinted to the shade we know as "coffee-color." Burnt grains must be thrown away. Lift the pan to a table, and stir into the hot coffee the beaten whites of two eggs for each pound, and a dessertspoonful of fresh butter. This keeps in the aroma until the grinding lets it out. Do it quickly and faithfully, glazing every berry with the air-proof coating. When cool, shake the coffee in a sieve, that the berries may not stick together, and put it into a tight canister. Grind in a good mill —*i. e.*, one that works well without rattling or "wobbling" — every morning as much as will be needed for the day. This was our mothers' and grandmothers' way of preparing coffee grains for making the most popular beverage known to civilized peoples, and no domestic considered herself aggrieved if required to do it. Now, the good wife who informs her cook that "we roast and grind our own coffee," will have trouble in the flesh. Bridget's impregnable belief is that "what is good enough for people that lives in finer houses nor yerself, is plenty good for yez." It is not to be undermined by representations that ground coffee bought by the package has lost much of its original value with time, and is, furthermore, shamefully adulterated. What your richer neighbors use ought to satisfy you, especially when discontent with it entails worry and labor upon herself. I repeat it: If you must have irreproachable coffee, look to it in person.

Next to this process in excellence is the plan of purchasing, a pound at a time, freshly-ground coffee from a trustworthy grocer, whose mill goes every day; or you may buy it freshly roasted in the grain from him in small quantities, putting a certain portion in the oven until warmed through, as you need it, and grinding it before it cools. This insures you against the admixture of foreign substances. The belief in the extensive adulteration of the ground coffee sold by the package at a low rate is founded upon a rock of fact. Sacks of beans and tons of chicory are bought without a scruple, and stored unblushingly in the warehouses of coffee and spice millers.

Make sure then, to begin with, that your material is pure and lately ground. On the last point, take notice that the coffee which is to be made into a drink by the percolation of steam or water should be ground more finely than when it is to be boiled.

Next see that the water is on what may be called "a fresh boil." It should not have simmered for hours at the side of the stove until all the liveliness is spent, but stand in the hottest place, where it will come quickly and furiously to the boiling point, then be used at once.

The perfection of coffee, to my way of thinking, is made in the "Vienna coffee-pot." A tea-kettle of copper, brass, or plated silver, full of boiling water, is set over a spirit lamp. Into it is fitted a tube attached to a glass receptacle for the finely-ground coffee, which is kept from entering the tube by a wire sieve. A tight stopper prevents the escape through the kettle-spout of the steam generated by the lamp. It is thus forced upward through the tube and sieve into the dry coffee. The globe has a brass cover that keeps in the heat. The coffee is speedily saturated with vapor, and begins to heave and boil

like the crater of a volcano. When the tossing mass fills the upper vessel, the stopper is withdrawn from the spout of the lower, and the surface slowly sinks to the original level. The stopper is replaced, and another boil begins. Three boils and as many drainings will leave in the kettle delicious black coffee, fragrant and clear. It can be made on the breakfast or dinner-table in five minutes, if the flame be strong and the water on the boil when set over it. Directions and measures for quantities of coffee and water accompany the pot.

Hardly second in merit to this method is the use of the French "biggin" or "grecque." A tin cylinder, furnished with two movable and one stationary strainers, is set on a coffee-pot. Dry, fine coffee goes into the upper vessel in the proportion of a half-pint cupful to a quart of *boiling* water poured on this, and left to filter through once, twice, or three times, as a moderately or very strong infusion is desired. The pot should be made hot by scalding before the cylinder is fitted on, then stand on the hot range or hearth, while the liquid drips through the strainers. But this *must not boil* then or afterwards.

Persons accustomed to Vienna or French coffee do not relish that cooked in the old-fashioned style, but as many still cling to the latter, it is well to know how to obtain the most satisfactory result offered by it.

Allow to each even cupful of ground coffee a quart of boiling water. Mix the coffee in a bowl with half a cupful of cold water and the white and shell of an egg; stir all well together before putting the mixture into the boiler. Add the boiling water, and let it boil *fast* ten minutes after it begins to bubble. Throw in one-third of a cupful of cold water to check ebullition; draw to one side, and let the decoction settle for three minutes before pouring it off gently from the grounds into the urn.

Send hot milk – cream, if you have it – to table with coffee. A teaspoonful of whipped cream, laid on the surface of each cupful, adds to the elegance of the beverage.

COFFEE – III.

Two Ways with Coffee, as Described by Mrs. Helen Campbell

PERHAPS the *two* should read twenty, and it would, were it any part of my present mission to give every possibility of method with the berry from bush to pot or filter. But I deal to-day only with two, and they define themselves at once, sharply and decisively – a good way and a bad way; and as, according to a famous moralist, we take more interest in the faults than in the virtues of a friend, it is with the bad way that we begin. It is a way susceptible of many variations, as my own eyes have seen, but all reducible to the one formula, – bad. Moreover, they all emanated from a source supposed to represent the acme of good housekeeping. It was in New England, far to the east, and the quiet house where a part of a summer was spent had every charm but that of good coffee. Paint, walls, and floors were spotlessly clean. The sheets smelled of green grass and all growing things, and, like every washable article, dazzled one with the whiteness and purity of their cleanliness. Bread and butter were perfect, and innumerable pies equally so. But the coffee! Freakishly, mysteriously, variously bad; but bad inevitably. Why and how one act could have such manifold effects became the problem, and gradually, by means of much patient observation made from my place by the south window in the room, which was both dining-room and sitting-room, I found out.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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