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Does Your Education Stop When You See a French Menu Card?

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THE STORY is told of a business man who sat down in a first class restaurant, and because he had forgotten his glasses, asked the waiter to read the menu. The waiter apologetically replied that he couldn't read French either.

That is just the case with many of us. Did you ever look at a menu card that made you wonder what you were going to get to eat? And then when you did get it, did you think that you had been "jipped?"

Well known staples, sold by the grocer, masquerade under French names to justify an enormous advance in price when this same staple is billed for at its real price. Yet the victim of such practices falls repeatedly. Many have been the "embarrassing moments" suffered by American innocents unschooled in French. A story is told of an American lady at a French hotel who once astonished and amused a party of her country people by translating a dish "Riz de Nez aux Anciens" to "The Smile of a Calf at the Banker's Wife."

It is a strange fact that hotels, restaurants, and authors of cook books seem to be obsessed with a desire to burden the public with messages which require translation by an interpreter (if you have not already mastered the French language yourself). Yet the endless stream of consumers tolerates such a practice and is eager for information which will enlighten its hazy ideas upon the subject. For these people and this reason this article is written.

It is due to the prestige of the French restaurants that French long ago became a second international language. Travel where you may, in all the principal cities of the world, at the leading restaurants, you will find the menu in French. And in the case of a dinner course, the viands offered in the order prescribed by French gourmets.

After the Franco-Prussian war, chauvinistic attempts were made in Germany to banish French words from the bill of fare. These attempts were in vain, for in some cases the ludicrous result was that Germans who recognized a dish under its French name had not the remotest idea what it was when translated into their own language.

Like the Italian "piano," "diminuendo," and other musical expression marks, French gastronomic terms have become parts of a universal language, which serves as a constant reminder of the most important contribution made by the great French nation to modern civilization—the gradual substitution everywhere of refined methods of preparing food in place of the barbarous mediaeval ones prevalent until two centuries ago.

Since the descriptive terms used in French cookery are now so commonly introduced into culinary and other treatises, a condensed glossary of them can hardly fail to prove practically useful here:

"A la" (pronounced ah lah) or au (oh) or aux (oh-sue) means "to or with.

A la mode—After the style of, or in the present fashion.

Andalous—Spanish style.

Artichaut—Artichoke.

Asperges—Asparagus.

Au gratin—Baked with grated cheese and crumbs.

Au jus—Meat baked with natural juice or gravy.

Au naturel—Cooked plainly and simply.

Aux cressons—With cress.

Bécarnel (bayscarmel)—French white sauce, made of white meat stock and cream, thickened like any white sauce.

Biftek—Beefsteak.

Bisque—A name given to certain soups usually made with shellfish.

Blanc—A white broth or gravy.

Blanc mangee—A conchasturb dessert set in a mold.

Blanche—This means various things in cookery. Strong or old vegetables are cooked a few minutes in boiling water to freshen or remove bitter taste. If young vegetables are blanched they are barely scalded. Rice is scalded before cooking it in milk and this is called blanching. It may mean parboiling. Calf's brains and sweet breads are blanched or par-boiled by putting off the fire in cold water, bringing that water to a boil, and then boiling them for five minutes. Almonds and pistachios are blanched in a similar way but for the purpose of removing the skins.

Blanquette—A stew with a white sauce thickened with yolk of egg.

Boeuf a la cailleurine—Braised beef with vegetables.

Boeuf braisé—Braised beef.

Boeuf rôti—Roast beef.

Bombe glacee—A mold of ice cream filled with a different kind of ice cream or water ice.

Bouilli (pronounced boo-lee)—Boiled beef.

Bouillon—A plain, clear soup. Unclarified beef broth.

Bourgeoise (a la) —In family style.

Braised or braising—A slow cooking process. Meat cooked in a closely covered stew pan to prevent evaporation, so that the meat thus cooked retains not only its own juices, but also those of the articles added for flavoring.

Brioche—A light sort of cake.

Cacao—Cocoa.

Café—Coffee.

Café au lait—Coffee with milk.

Café noir—Strong black coffee.

Camapés—An appetizer served on a thin and narrow slice of bread, half a tiny sandwich. The bread is usually toasted on one side.

Canard—Duck.

Caramel—Caramel sugar, for coloring soups.

Casserole—A form of rice or macaroni filled with minced meat, game puree, etc.

Caviar—Salted roe of sturgeon (fish eggs) or celeriac.

Charlotte Russe—A sweet dish made of a casing of bread or cake, the inside filled with cream or fruit.

Chartreuse—Various kinds of fruit, vegetables, or game molded in goblet shape.

Chaud—Hot.

Chef de cuisine—Head cook.

Chocolat—Chocolate.

Compte—Fruit stewed in syrup so as to retain its shape.

Concombre—Cucumber.

Consommé—Clear strong gravy soup. The clarified liquor in which meat or poultry has been boiled.

Côtilètes—Cutlets or chops.

Cotelle de mouton—Mutton chops.

Creme—Cream.

Crostini and Rissoles—Small, light entrees, prepared with minced meat, made into shapes and fried.

Croutons—Pieces of bread fried in butter. Tiny dice are used for garnishing soups; small triangles, etc., for garnishing hashes, stews, etc.

Demi-tasse—Literally "half cup." Used to serve a small cup of black coffee served at the close of a luncheon or dinner.

Diable—Deviled; applied to dishes with sauce and hot seasoning.

Eclair—A French pastry filled with cream.

En cocotte—A form of rice or macaroni filled with minced meat, puree, etc.

Entrée—A course of dishes or course for the first course.

Escalope—Thick, round steaks of veal.

Espagnole—Spanish style; a rich brown sauce.

Farce—Force meat or stuffing.

Farcie—Stuffed.

Filet—The tender cut of a loin of beef, mutton, veal, pork or game.

Fondue—A preparation of melted cheese.

Fondue—A form of rice or macaroni filled with minced meat, puree, etc.

Glace-Frozen.

Gibier—Game.

Glace—A term employed promiscuously, but simply meaning a shining, glazed surface, whether a cake iced or a ham glazed.

Goulash—Finely sliced beef or veal stew, highly seasoned; a Hungarian dish.

Gros—Rich gravy, made from meat.

Grille—Braised.

Grille—Broiled.

Gumbo—American term for okra soup or other preparation from okra.

Haricots verts—Small green string beans.

Hollandaise—Dutch style; also the name of a rich white sauce.

Hors-d'oeuvre—Appetizers. Dainty dishes, served cold before the soup.

Huîtres—Oysters.

Italiane—Italian style.

Jambon—Ham.
April Showers

By ADA HAYDEN, Assistant Professor of Botany

APRIL showers once brought forth May flowers, but all the King's horses and all the King's men cannot bring forth wild spring flowers again, if the persistent gatherers of wild flowers leave not some little vestige of life wherever the plant may live. As spring flowers live only in verse, or on hats, for the children in the land where the tall corn grows? Shall there be no more woodland nor prairie, only cow pastures and cornfields? Must flowers be sought only in encyclopedias and in curios, or in flower gardens of wilder collectors?

When in distant times, the sunlight first fell upon the earth emerged from the world sea, no spring flowers blossomed. As the waves splashed upon the shore some small simple plants finally crept up the rocks and established themselves in the damp air on their surfaces gradually scaling off the rock particles among which some of the plants became buried. These accumulated soil particles were fine soil food and after only several hundred thousand years did plants of greater stature rise so high into the air that they needed roots anchored in this newly made earth to absorb the water food of the soil and vessels to carry the food to the remote aerial rocks of the plant.

But there was not yet enough earth for the many plants crowded in the meager, plant-made soil on the rocks. About this time a great sliding field of ice came slowly slipping from the arctic regions, breaking off the crags, rolling boulders as pebbles before it, grinding fine, as flour, tons, acres and square miles of rock into earth. Then years after this great white blanket had melted away hosts of fern plants gradually covered the earth.

Again the earth sank back into the sea for several thousand years and all that remained of the forest when the earth rose again was the semi-protected vegetation known as coal, partly covered with layers of sandy sediment from the sea.

by the winds of March turns pale lavender as the Pasque flowers wake in the spring. Once as the splashing drops of April have carried the fragrance of these March flowers far, the grassy slope as a magic carpet is blue with violets. In June the Scarlet Lily, as torches, light the slope, the Blazing Star marks the zenith of July as Sunflowers and Goldenrods herald the climax of the summer. As the Astrantia, like pools of sky dropped down, gleam in the warm October haze. So passed thru the summer, the panorama primeval, which the flowers of spring had ushered in, and the children played among the flowers.

But the Goddess of Agriculture has banished the prairie and over it spread green fields of shimmering, rustling, yellow tasseled corn, acres of tawny, oat shocks and ragweed covered pastures. Even yet in the nearby wood which her realm has not fully enveloped, one may still find the birth of spring celebrated by the flowers.

Follow the bluebird. As he sings in the late days of March from the earth spring rocks of white Trilliums on the brown bare wooded hills and the breezes rustling on, bear the news to the few rusty hills where the lavender Pasque flowers nestle in the dry resting grass, while the buzzing, humming bees take their fill. Easter time is here. Now all the plants may come. From the reddish Liverwort leaves flattened by the winter snow, rise the slender fragrant flowers of the blue Hepatica and her sisters, lavender, pink and white soon dress the woodland hills in a soft and gauzy film, tossed lightly to and fro, made of magic sunlight open wide like white bubbles; its tight petals at like white bubbles; its tight petals at