Liver for My Hotspur

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"Tell me, sweet lord, what’s that takes from thee?
Thy stomach, pleasure an’ thy gold.
Why dost thou bend thine eyes upon the earth,
And start so often when thou sit’st there.
Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks,
And given my treasures and my rights to thee.
To thick-eyed musing and cursed melancholy?"

NOT in this Shakespearian manner would I, if I were Lady Percy, lament my apparently anemic Hotspur. I would not cry and berate, but I would stuff my wan and despondent spouse full of liver, and confidently expect his “stomach” to return shortly along with “pleasure” and his “golden sleep”. Soon would there be “fresh blood” in his cheeks, the “cursed melancholy” vanished and delight restored in me, his lady love.

Now, if a baby cries, or hubby is absent minded, we run for the cod-liver oil bottle, serve spinach for lunch, or bran muffins at dinner; so practical and so physical have we become in the harness of life. Perhaps we are too interested in food, too self-conscious in eating, yet philosophers realize that for self-preservation we must be, “Man does not die,” said Seneca, “he kills himself”—or his wife kills him, moan all ailing Hotspurs.

Poor fellows, we shall mend our ways.

“But,” ask many Lady Persies, “you have chosen liver to rejuvenate Hotspur. Is that better than spinach, or milk, or cod liver oil?” We answer that no one food is perfect, that the meal planner must utilize all types of foods to get the perfect and complete combination. Nevertheless, liver is a remarkable food rich in vitamins, with an exceptionally fine protein, and abundant in iron. It has been found to be superior to all other foods in promoting the production of red blood cells and hemoglobin.

We may include liver with cod liver oil, egg yolks and butter fat in being a valuable source of vitamins A and D, which are necessary in our daily diets to guard us from eye diseases, infection of the upper respiratory tracts so common in this country, and to promote good health and growth with ability to reproduce and rear active children.

Vitamin B is also found abundantly in liver. This vitamin is essential for growth, good health and protection against nervous disorders. This is the vitamin which is largely responsible for appearance and when my Hotspur receives it, his “stomach” will return, and he will be cured of his sleeplessness and irritability.

Though vitamin C is quite abundant in liver, this vitamin is unstable and is partially destroyed by heat. Since we have not yet learned to eat raw meat, perhaps we’ll better supply Hotspur with fresh fruits and leafy vegetables, such as oranges and grapefruit, cabbage and spinach, to ease up the stiffness of his joints and give him helpings of liver.

Therefore, Lady Percys, we may consider liver as an abundant source of the vitamins and place it high on our list of “protective foods,” and not think of it only as a source of protein, although it is an excellent protein. That protein as an essential part of our food is recognized by even the most antediluvian, who serves without question some type of meat to her family every day. But few people realize that some meats are more valuable than others.

“The muscular tissue of an animal consists of a highly specialized substance,” according to McCollum, “the chief function of which is to do mechanical work through contraction.” Wastes the glandular organs are the seat of chemical activity and contain valuable cellular structures.

“Too much emphasis,” he continues, “cannot be placed upon the dietary deficiency of liver, rich in vitamins as beef, ham, steaks, and heart, and rich in minerals which carry the sunshine, are a valuable source of vitamins A and D, and effective in building red blood cells. The meat eating of the peoples of the temperate regions of America is limited essentially to the consumption of muscle tissue. In dietary properties this is the poorest part of the carcass.

“ Carnivores at times, which live entirely upon meat, make good the deficiencies of the muscle meat, by feeding on the blood, which furnishes the common salt nearly lacking in muscle, and delivers to the glandular organs, which make good the vitamins and minerals. It is said that the cat and the dog families, having killed their prey, open the jugular vein and lap up the blood first of all, then tear open the abdomen and feed on the organs. Only after these morsels have vanished do the animals eat the muscle meat.

The few peoples of our earth who are carnivorous do not live on muscle meat alone, but, like the animals, eat the entire edible portions of the animals. The Eskimos, with whom Steffansson, the famous Arctic explorer, spent 11 and a half years, are carnivorous. He is reported to have eaten only meat and toll. Our own American Indians, who roamed east of the Rockies, ate this type of diet, according to the report of Lewis and Clarke. We do not slow down the blood of animals or even the alimentary tract.

Not only because of its vitamins and its excellent type of protein is liver the ideal meat, but also because it is remarkably rich in iron, and has recently come to the front of all foods in its ability to bring about regeneration of the blood. Iron, we know, is the most important element of our blood, because it forms part of the hemoglobin, the substance which gives blood its red color, and which carries oxygen to the cells of the body. As one author says, iron acts as a “key” with which energy is released from food.

Who isn’t acquainted with some of these pale, limp, anemic individuals who lack luster and the desire to live; who carry the burdens of the world on their rounded shoulders? Lead them to a hospital and a nurse will confirm your worst suspicions, a low blood count and a low percentage of hemoglobin.

The much advertised raisin has received too much publicity. Your “iron today” can be found in greatest quantity in molasses, egg yolk, spinach and liver.

Of all the iron-rich foods, the most efficient in building red blood cells has been found to be the liver. Physiologists working with dogs and rats have found that in every case liver was more potent than any other food in increasing hemoglobin and increasing red blood cells. Chicken liver was as effective as beef or pig liver. Chicken gizzard was almost as good as liver.

My Hotspur’s wan cheeks can again glow with “fresh blood” after several weeks of the liver diet now being prescribed by physicians for pernicious anemia.

For hundreds of years pernicious anemia baffled science. Red blood cells, mysteriously destroyed by an unknown factor, caused many an individual’s ill health, unhappiness and death. There was no known way to curb the fatal destruction of red cells or to stimulate blood formation. The person taken with pernicious anemia was hopeless.

But two men, George R. Minot and William Murphy, have found that for humans a special diet may prevent or relieve pernicious anemia, instigating a rapid regeneration of the blood cells back to a normal number. They have successfully treated a large series of cases for the last three years. This is the diet they recommend:

Liver (calves or beef) is given daily in relatively large amounts. Occasional variation is allowed with chicken livers, lamb’s, kidneys or sweetbreads.

Fruit, that containing a low percent of sugar is given at least twice daily and used in place of sweet desserts.

Vegetables form the bulk of the diet, especially the green type such as spinach, lettuce and young string beans. Several large helpings should be taken daily. Corn, potatoes, shell beans are to be avoided.

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Muscle meat, steaks, roasts, lamb chops are used. Pork and fat is to be avoided.

Bread is preferred crisp and dry. Whole grain is the best. No hot bread allowed.

Cereals for breakfast. Potatoes, rice, macaroni or noodles are given once daily.

One egg and a glass of milk may be had once daily if desired.

Fried and fatty foods should be avoided. Butter and cream may be used moderately to make foods palatable.

Grossly sweet foods are to be avoided.

Seasoning must be used sparingly.

The liver and muscle meat should be eaten rather rare, not fried, but baked or broiled.

All of the patients showed prompt, rapid and distinct remission of their anemia, and their blood was brought back to normal. Writing of the diet, Dr. Murphy says, "It is quite possible that the development of this disease could be prevented if one were to eat a diet throughout life somewhat similar to the one described. Such a regime should be even more important for those individuals who may be considered as belonging to the group described as being especially susceptible to the development of this condition."

The day is not far away when the food value of liver will be universally recognized by the public, and liver becomes the most sought for and expensive of meats. But until then, the frugal housewife who knows her food costs finds it one of the cheapest meats on the market. In grandmother's time, liver was given away, because it was impossible to sell it to the butcher. Today it costs about 20 or 25 cents a pound.

Range this price of liver alongside the price of the common cuts of meats, which daily grace our table and which cannot compare with it in food value, so deficient are they in all the choice life substances which liver offers so liberally. Bacon is 65 cents per pound, sausages 45 cents, porterhouse beef steak 30 cents, lamb chops 25 cents and chicken 26 cents. These are prices of meat as purchased, and do not account for the weight lost by trimming, bones and cooking. We eat only 56 percent of the beef steak, which would bring its cost up to 52 cents a pound. But 26 percent of the lamb chop is eaten, the rest is lost by cooking or taken up with bone and gristle. We note its purchase price as 28 cents, but actually it costs us 1.10 per pound.

Of the chicken, which cost 26 cents a pound, only 35 percent is eaten, bringing its price up to 28 cents a pound.

There is no bone loss, and very little waste or shrinkage in the preparation of liver for the table. Therefore it offers to the intelligent housewife not only an exceptionally high quality protein for low protein intake, but a high quality protein at the lowest market price.

What shall we say of the gustatory merits of liver? Is it possible that a food which is apparently so good for us can also be pleasing to the palate? Will our Hotspur like liver?

Indeed, yes. Though not common on our American table, it is a very old food favorite of foreign countries. The Germans and Liverwurst are inexorable. Pate de foie gras, a dish made of goose livers, is a favorite in France. It is said that Alsace is almost more noted for its fine geese, from which the livers are taken, than for the fact that it was the scene of an important war in French history. A minister visiting Alsace said, "My idea of Heaven is eating pate de foie gras to the sound of trumpets."

Thudichum, an Englishman of the last century, wrote of the excellent flavor of fried liver, due to the "osmozone," which it forms during frying. "Osmozone," as I understand it, is that specially sapid part of meat which resembles caramel, forming the crisp brown on roasts, and yields flavor to the browned and game, both particularly rich in it.

The smooth, suave and velvet texture of liver and its distinct flavor combine well with all the foods of a meal, tart acids of salads, the sweets of fresh fruits or jellies, and bland or piquant sauces.

If fried calf's liver and bacon have been your only accomplishment with this meat, try some of the following rules and combinations:

**Scalloped Liver with Oysters**

1. cup cooked liver
1 pint oysters
1 slice bacon
1/2 cup tomato sauce
1/2 cup cracker crumbs
Salt and pepper

Cut liver into small cubes and put half in a baking dish. Clean oysters, place on top of the liver and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook bacon, cut in strips and place on the oysters. Cover with remaining liver and pour sauce over all pour tomato sauce. Mix the crumbs and hot bacon fat and sprinkle over the top. Bake half an hour in a moderate oven.

**Liver in Ramekins**

Pour boiling water over 1 pound of sliced calf's liver, drain, chop into small pieces, dredge slightly with flour, season with salt, fry quickly until brown and remove from pan. In the same pan melt 1 tbsp. of fat, add 2 thaps. of flour and brown slightly. Pour in 1/4 cups of milk and bring to the boiling point, stirring constantly.

Add 2 tbsp. of chopped chile, 1 tbsp. of chopped onion and the liver. Put into greased ramekins, cover with
Liver Patties

Mix 1 1/2 cups of chopped liver, 1 1/2 cups of mashed potatoes, 2 tbsp. of finely chopped green chile and 1/2 tsp. salt. Grease patty pans, sprinkle with coarse crumbs and fill with mixture. Bake 15 minutes in a hot oven, turn out on a hot platter and surround with chile brown sauce.

Baked Tomatoes with Liver Stuffing

8 tomatoes
2 tbsp. bacon fat or butter
1 small onion, finely minced
2 lb. liver, chopped fine or ground
1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
1 small can mushrooms, chopped
1 tsp finely chopped parsley
Few drops lemon juice
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

Wash tomatoes in cold water and cut off from the bottom of each a slice thick enough to serve as a cover while the tomatoes are baking. With a small spoon carefully remove the pulp and seeds. Turn the tomatoes upside down on a tray to drain and set in a cold place to chill. Melt the fat and add the onion and liver, allow to brown slightly and then add the remaining ingredients. Add enough of the tomato juice and pulp to make the mixture slightly moist. Fill the chilled tomatoes, cover with top slices and bake in an open pan in a moderate oven. Toothpicks can be used to hold the tops in place during the baking. The tomatoes are more easily eaten if the skins are removed first, but this demands much care in preparing, cooking and serving.

Liver Leaf

Cut a small liver in slices and cover with boiling water for a few minutes. Dry and run through a meat chopper. Add 2 cups of bread crumbs, 2 tsp. salt, 1/2 tsp. celery salt, 1/2 tsp pepper and 2 eggs. Mix well and pour into an oiled mold. Cover with slices of bacon. Set mold in a pan of water and bake in the oven for one hour. Serve hot with sauce or slice cold.

Lyonaise of Liver with Fried Crusts

It is liver and onion in brown sauce. Fry a cupful or more of chopped onions, green ones are preferable, in a pan until brown and then add the liver with the onions, green ones are preferable. In a pan, Reserve the liver and add the remaining ingredients. Brown the chopped onion in the pan, add the liver and brown sauce. Then fill the chilled tomatoes, cover with top slices and bake in an open pan in a moderate oven. Toothpicks can be used to hold the tops in place during the baking. The tomatoes are more easily eaten if the skins are removed first, but this demands much care in preparing, cooking and serving.

Stuffing for Turkey

Grind the following: One small loaf of bread which has been sliced and toasted, turkey gizzard, liver, heart and two pork kidneys, 1 onion and 2 or 3 cups of chopped celery, 1 cup walnut meats.
Mix that thoroughly with: 2 eggs well beaten, pepper and salt, 1 tbsp. of butter. Then it is ready to go in the turkey.

Italian Spaghetti

1 medium sized onion, chopped
2 tbsp. butter
1/2 lb. calf's liver
1 tbsp. chopped celery
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
2 cups tomatoes
1/2 lb. or 3 cups uncooked spaghetti
Parmesan cheese

Brown the chopped onion in the butter. Add the chopped liver, parsley, salt and pepper and cook slowly for 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes and let simmer for about 20 minutes. In the meantime, cook the spaghetti in four quarts of boiling water, to which 4 tsp. of salt has been added. When tender, drain. Have a platter buttered and hot and sprinkle with grated cheese. Pile the spaghetti on the platter and pour the sauce over it. Sprinkle with more cheese and serve hot.