

## ALLIED FOOD

As soon as I heard of the proposed plan of this book I became positively frantic to co-operate in it. The idea of a cookery book which should contain Allied Recipes and Allied Recipes only, struck me at once as one of the finest ideas of the day.

For myself I have felt for some time past that the time is gone, and gone for ever, when I can eat a German Pretzel or a Wiener Schnitzel.

It gives me nothing but remorse to remember that there were days when I tolerated, I may even say I enjoyed, Hungarian Goulash. I could not eat it now. As for Bulgarian Boosh or Turkish Tch'kk, the mere names of them make me ill.

For me, for the rest of my life, it must be Allied Food or no food at all. One may judge, therefore, with what delight I received the news of this patriotic enterprise. I at once telegraphed to the editors the following words:

“Am willing to place at your service without charge entire knowledge of cookery. Forty-six years’ practical experience.”

To this telegram I received no reply. I am aware that there is, even in cooking circles, a certain amount of professional jealousy. It may be that I had overpassed the line of good taste in offering my entire knowledge. I should have only offered part of it.

I therefore resolved that instead of writing the whole book as I had at first intended, I would content myself with sending to the editors, a certain number of selected recipes of a kind calculated to put the book in a class all by itself.

I sent, in all, fifty recipes. I regret to say that after looking over the pages of the book with the greatest care, and after looking also on the back of them, I do not find my recipes included in it. The obvious conclusion is that while this book was in the press my recipes were stolen out of it.

The various dishes that I had selected were of so distinctive a character and the art involved in their preparation so entirely *recherché* that it seems a pity that they should be altogether lost. They contained a certain *je ne sais quoi* which would have marked them out as emphatically the perquisite of the few. To say that they

were dishes for a king is to understate the fact.

It is therefore merely in the public interest and from no sense of personal vanity that I reproduce the substance of one or two of them in this preface. There was a whole section, for example, on Eggs, which I am extremely loath to lose. It showed how by holding an egg down under boiling water till it is exhausted, it may be first cooked and then be passed under a flat iron until it becomes an Egg Pancake. It may be then given a thin coat of varnish and served in a railway restaurant for years and years.

I had also an excellent recipe for Rum Omelette. It read: "Take a dipper full of rum and insert an omelette in it. Serve anywhere in Ontario." I am convinced that this recipe alone would have been worth its weight in rum.

But it would be childish of me to lay too much stress on my own personal disappointment or regret. When I realized what had happened I felt at once that my co-operation in this book must take some other form. I therefore sent to the editors a second telegram which read:

"Am willing to eat free of charge all dishes contained in volume."

This offer was immediately accepted, and I am happy to assure readers of this book that I have eaten each and every one of the preparations in the

pages that follow. To prevent all doubt I make this statement under oath. I had intended to make merely an honest statement of the fact but my friends tell me that a statement under oath is better in such a case than a mere honest statement.

Stephen Leacock