

*The Project Gutenberg eBook of Congress Hotel, Home of a Thousand Homes, by W. S. Goodnaw and Irving S. Paull*

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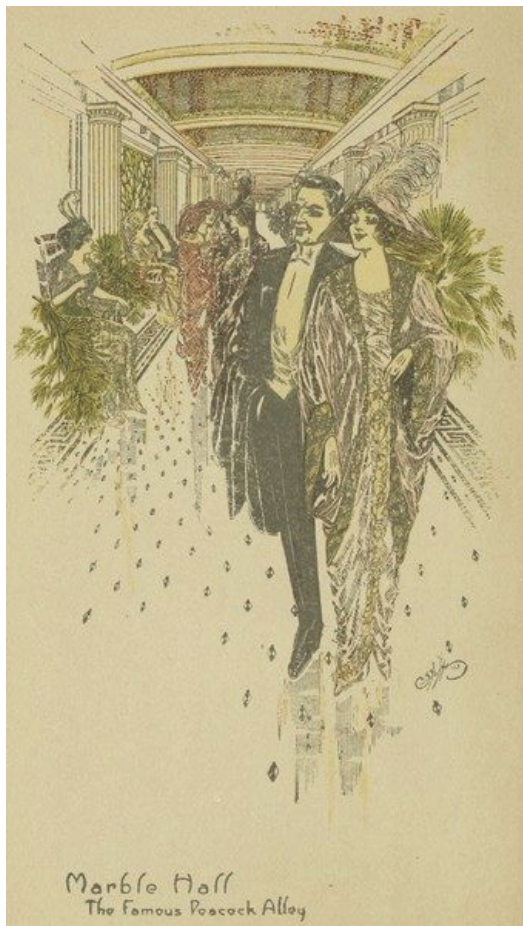
Transcriber's Note:

The spelling in this short text is a mixture of American and British English. The little French is both accented correctly and missing accents. The spellings below are exactly as found in the original.

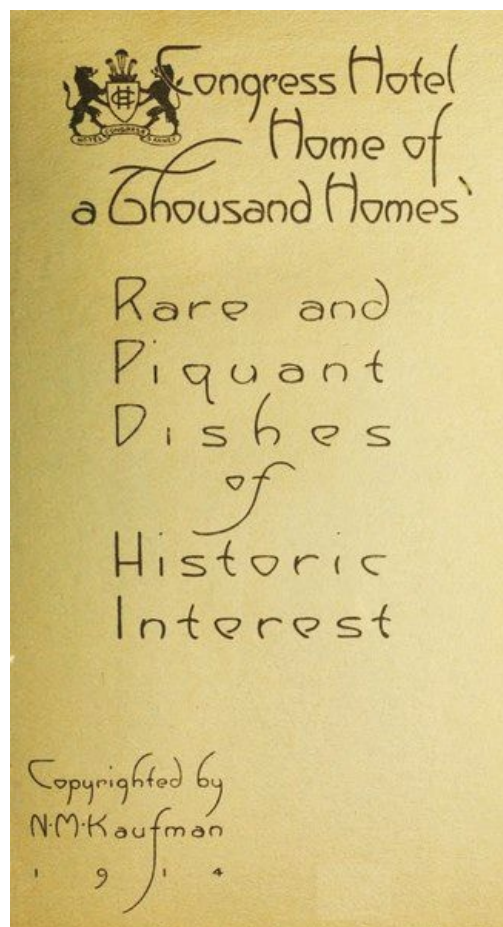


HOME OF  
A  
THOUSAND  
HOMES

CONTAINING  
RARE AND PIOUSANT  
DISHES OF HISTORIC  
INTEREST



Marble Hall  
The Famous Peacock Alley

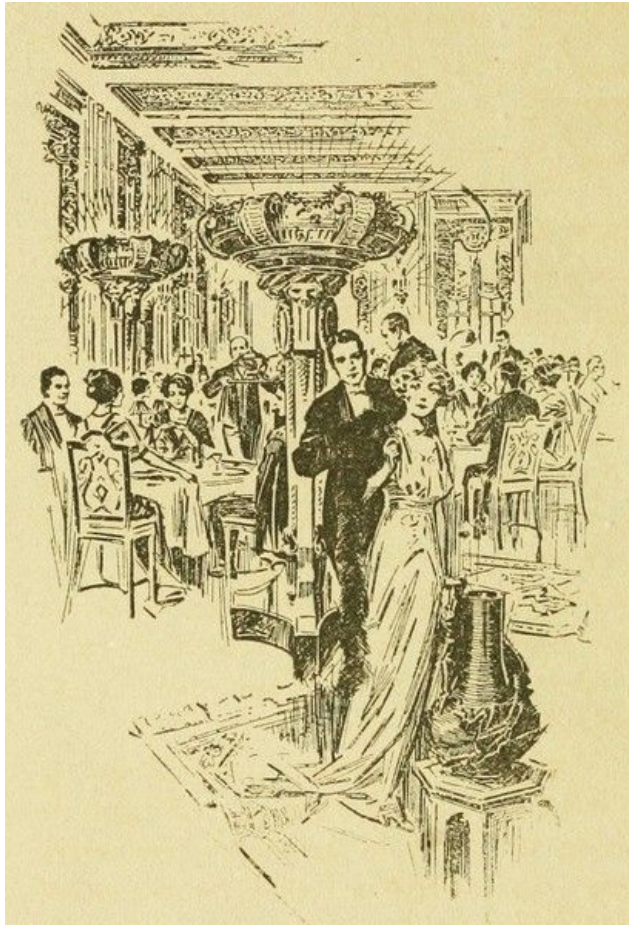


**Congress Hotel**  
**Home of**  
**a Thousand Homes**

Rare and Piquant

# Dishes of Historic Interest

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1914



*True friends a few, a nice abode,  
And dinners fine and Recherchés—  
Far better such for peace of mind  
Than Life's refrain "Ah Lack a Day."*

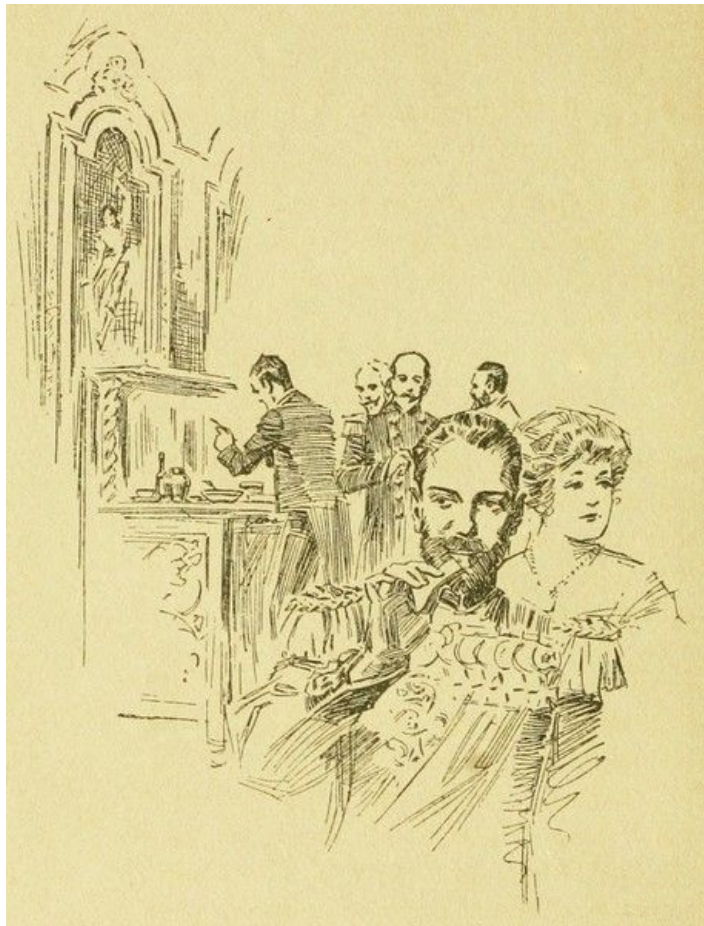
—Grimrod de la Reyniere

The epicure says we live to eat; the ascetic maintains we eat to live. Perchance there is a grain of truth in the French maxim that we eat to live only when we do not understand how to live to eat. However that may be, those of us who are wise in our generation are content with the golden mean between these widely variant schools.

The dishes herein set forth are a few of the most piquant and rare in all the enchanting lore of cookery. About many of them cluster striking anecdotes of famous characters of history whose destinies have been strangely influenced by their epicurean tastes and habits.

These and other culinary masterpieces are produced at the Congress by artistes de cuisine, and served in their distinctive native form. Those who have visited famous eating places abroad will be glad to renew their acquaintance with these celebrated dishes. All who appreciate exquisite cookery will find them a delightful treat.

These delicacies do not appear on the regular bill of fare, but on a special menu card which may be had, upon request, from the maitre d'hotel.



*"Man is a carnivorous production  
And must have meals—at least once a day  
He cannot live, like woodcocks, upon suction."*

*—Lord Byron*

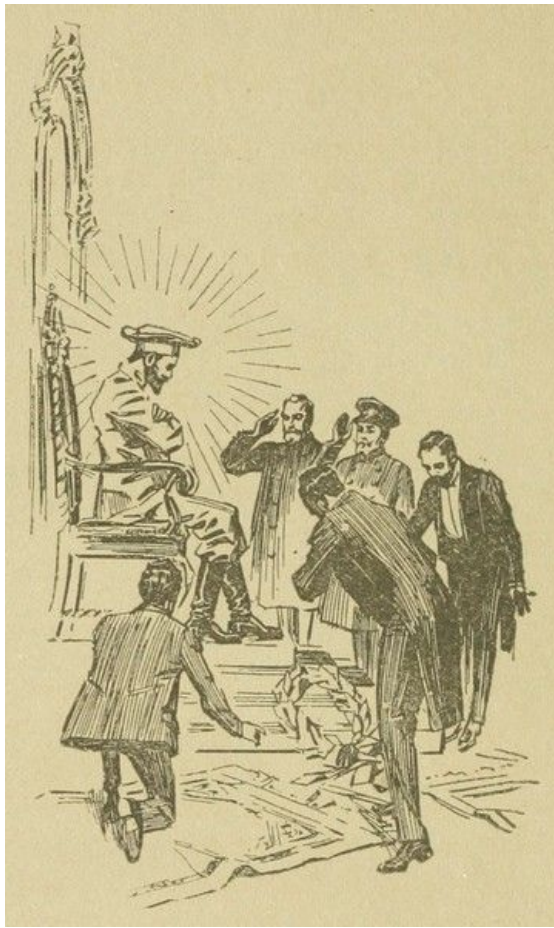
## *Beluga Caviar with Blinis*

**R**ussia has contributed many original dishes to the cuisine of the world, but perhaps the greatest alimentary gift of all for which we are indebted to the land of the tsars is Beluga Caviar with Blinis.

The blinis, which take the place of the French toast canape, are a Russian adaptation or version of American wheatcakes except that they are not sweetened. When the blinis are done to a rich golden brown they are brought to the table piping hot and the caviar, taken from a jar sunk in ice, is spread on top.

At the Congress the blinis are made and served in true Russian style, with specially imported pearl egg Beluga Caviar—the favorite of all epicures.

Tradition says this dish was originated in the Russian Winter Palace during the reign of Tsar Alexander, uncle of the present emperor. Alexander was an illustrious gourmet, and, so the story goes, was as much at home in the mysteries of cookery as in the intrigues of state. But whether he or his chef conceived this typically Russian dish, tradition does not disclose.



*"The combat deepens. On ye brave,  
The Cordon Bleu—and then the grave  
Wave Landlord, all thy menus wave,  
And charge with all thy deviltry."*

—*Old Ballad*

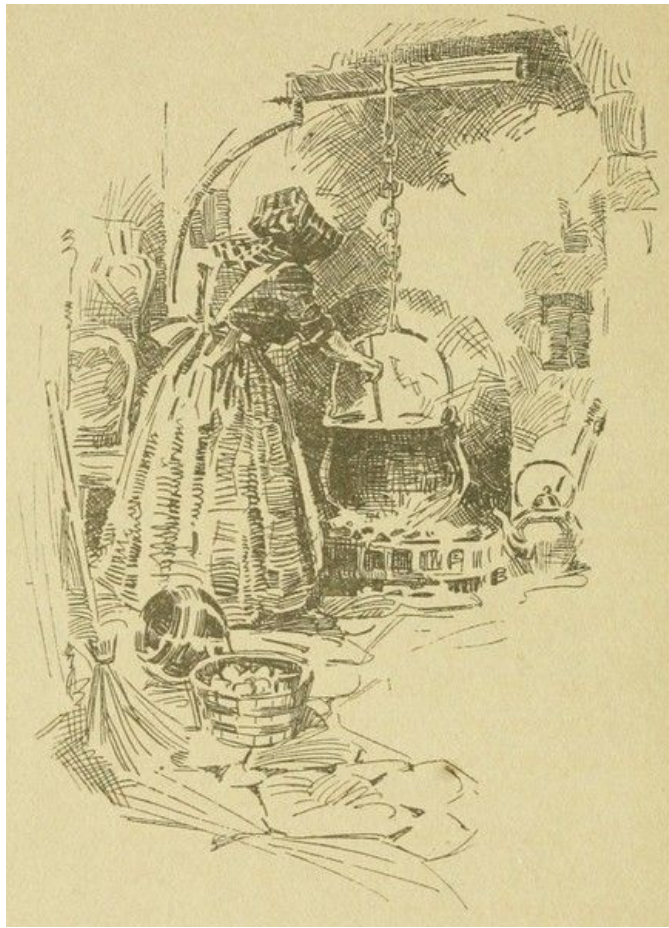
## *Tomato Volga*

**R**ussia is justly famed as the land of hors d' oeuvres—delightful whets that clear the palate. But none of these delicacies are more tempting to the epicure than Tomato Volga.

That chef—his name unhappily is not known—who bestowed this culinary gift upon the elect is worthy of our deepest gratitude. Only in the land of the Volga is the worth of such gastronomic artists rightly appraised. Endowed with perfect technique, clear palates and inexhaustible patience, chefs there are considered in a class apart—second only to the nobles.

At the Congress, Tomato Volga is served in a manner that would delight the heart of its creator. Only the finest vine ripened tomatoes—tributes of the hotbed—are used. The pommes de amour, as the French call them on account of their beautiful red hue, are hollowed out and stuffed with Beluga caviar and grated yolks of eggs.

The blending produces an exquisite result—one that would flatter even the most *blasé* palate.



*"The stewed cock shall crow, cock-a-loodle loo,  
A loud cock-a-loodle shall he crow;  
The duck and the drake shall swim in a lake  
Of onions and claret below."*

*—Fletcher*

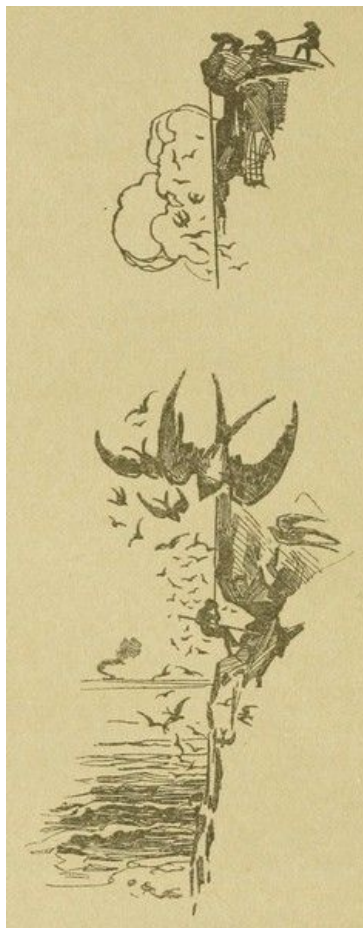
## *Poule au Pot Henri Quatre*

Since the day when good King Henri Quatre vowed that every peasant of France should have a fowl in his pot every Sunday, this delightful soup has been named in his honor. Waving away the exquisite bouillons, lordly consommés and rich bisques set before him, it was Henri's wont to call for poule au pot.

And as he smacked the royal lips he swore that every subject in his realm should have the happiness of tasting this kingly dish.

Poule au pot is served to patrons of the Congress just as it came to Henri's table in days of old. A whole capon, swimming in his own broth, is brought to the table in a huge terrine, with a great silver ladle. Then the capon is taken out, carved at one side and served in the same dish as the rich broth.

Its palatable taste, as well as its unique and distinctive service, makes this dish a prime favorite among those who dine well.



*Flow wine, smile woman  
And the universe is consoled.*

—*Old Proverb*

## *Consomme Nids d'Hirondelles*

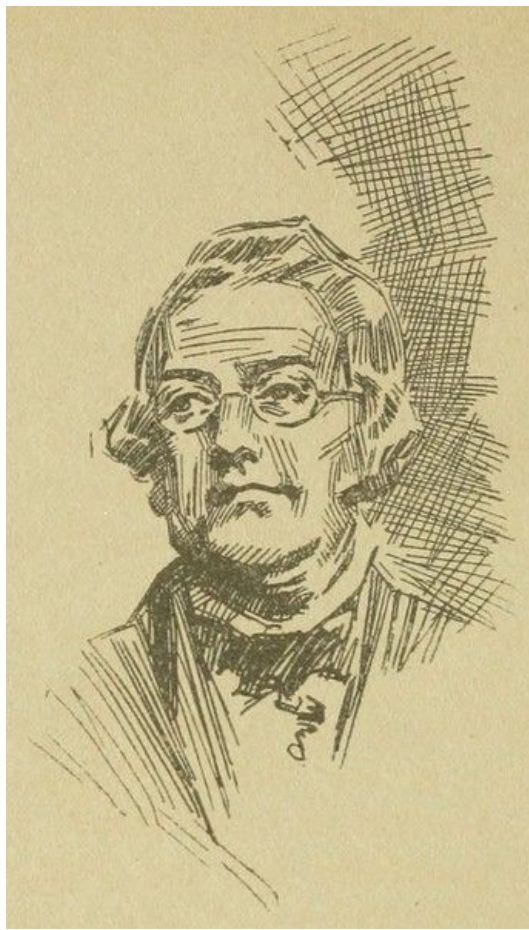
Since the days of Kublai Khan, the Great, whose Tartar hordes swept over China centuries ago, swallows nest soup has been a luxury to grace the table of epicures and kings.

The exquisite taste of this typical Oriental delicacy so delighted the palates of the Tartar kings, says tradition, that tidings of it were carried back to Europe by traders and wanderers. So in time the news reached Paris and Chinese swallows nests soon were brought from the far East—priceless luxuries for the delectation of the anointed.

The nests, which are gathered in cliffs, are composed of a gelatinous substance, said to be the spawn of fish, and impart a delightful piquancy to chicken stock. Alexander Dumas—as celebrated a gastronomer as a writer—upon tasting the consomme pronounced it a dish fit for the gods.

Only the choicest of these nests—collected from the most perilous ledges along the Asiatic Coast—are used by the Congress chefs in preparing this culinary rarity.





*"This Bouillabaise a noble dish is—  
A sort of soup or broth, or brew,  
Or hotchpotch of all sorts of fishes,  
That Greenwich never could outdo:  
Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffron,  
Soles, onions, garlic, roach and dace:  
All these you eat at Terre's tavern  
In that one bowl of Bouillabaise.*

*"Indeed, a rich and savoury stew 'tis;  
And true philosophers, methinks,  
Who love all sorts of natural beauties,  
Should love good victuals and good drinks.  
And Cordelier or Benedictine  
Might gladly, sure, his lot embrace,  
Nor find a fast-day too afflicting,  
Which served him up a Bouillabaise."*

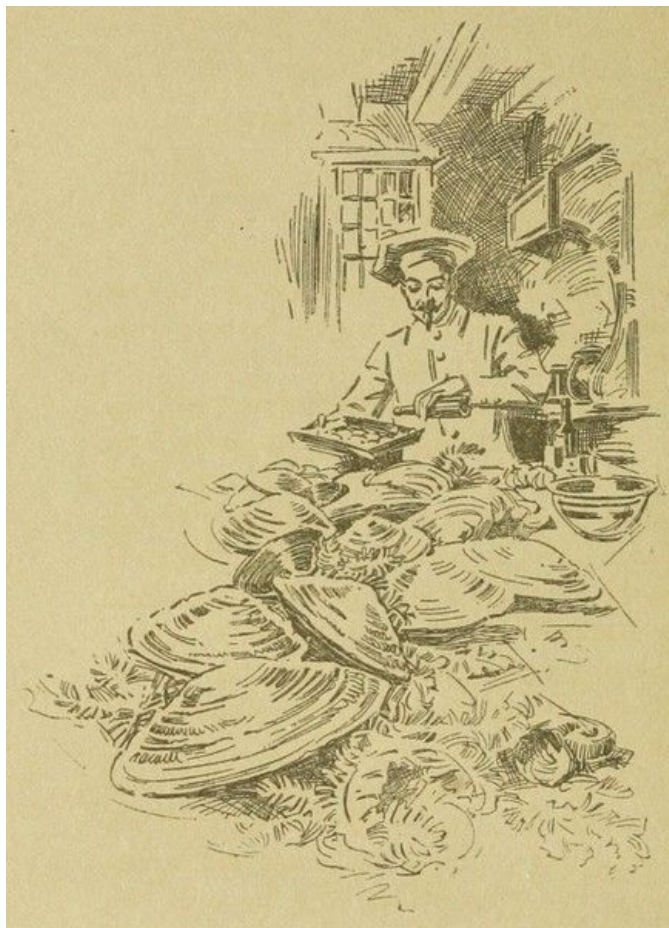
—Thackeray's *"Ballad of Bouillabaise"*

## *Bouillabaise*

**I**ts fragrant aroma, its sweet spiciness and its unmatched sauce in which mussels and other denizens of the deep have been brewed to a wondrous flavor have won for Bouillabaise the appellation: "The Dish of Kings."

In the stirring days just before the Third Empire of France it wooed the palates of famous bon vivants who thronged the cafes of Paris—among them William Makepeace Thackeray. And beef-fed Briton that he was—upon being initiated into the delightful mysteries of Bouillabaise, Thackeray was moved to write a ringing ballad in its praise.

As the smoking Bouillabaise comes from the sanctum of the Congress Chef to your table, it wafts an incense upon which, alone, "man could live and thrive." And its flavor—well if Thackeray could feast with you who knows but that he would be inspired to pen a postlude to his charming roundelay.



*"Tom, whom to-day no noise stirs,  
Lies buried in these cloisters.  
If at the last trump  
He does not quickly jump,  
Only cry: 'Oysters!'"*

*—Epitaph on a Grave at Colchester, England*

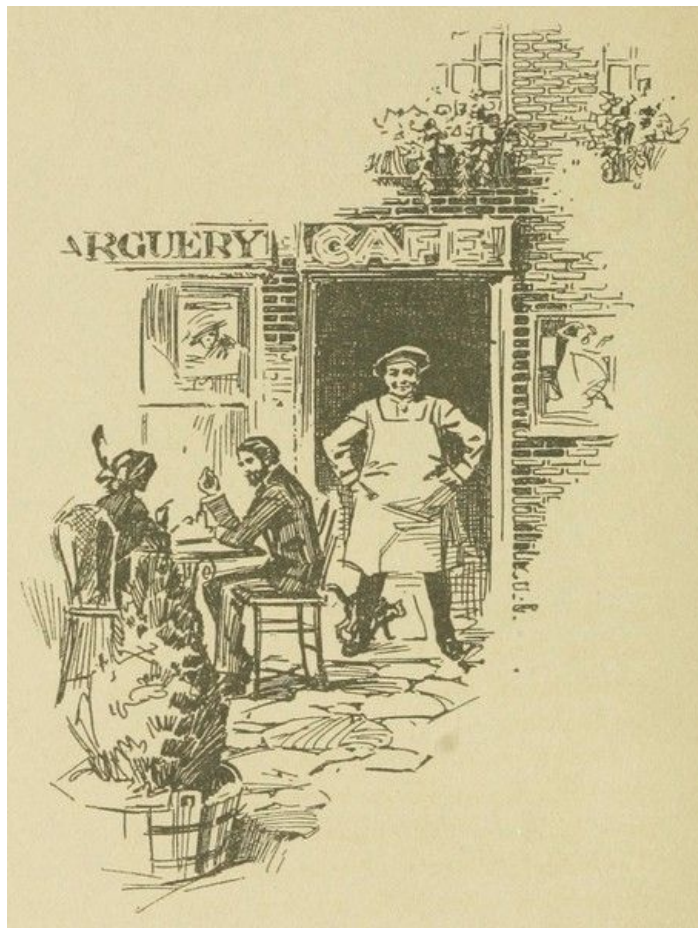
## *Oysters Bourguignonne*

**T**he delectable savour of oysters delighted the palates of epicures as far back as the time of Apicius—the celebrated Roman gourmet who moved his palace to the seashore in order to have fresh shellfish for his table.

When Apicius discovered how to keep oysters alive during long journeys he narrowly escaped being deified. But the bivalves which he knew were tiny dwarfs—like our clams. How he would have been transported at the sight of a dozen luscious Sadde Rochs or Malpecques. And for a dish of Lynnhavens a la Bourguignonne from the kitchen at the Congress—well he squandered an estate for less.

The oysters are placed in a pan moistened with olive oil. The Chef's deft hand bestows a pianissimo touch of garlic and just a suspicion of onion. Then the bivalves are placed in the oven and roasted in their own fortresses, as it were. Soon the shells open and the rich liquor pours out. Thus, bathed in this delicious juice, they are brought to the table and served.

It was Napoleon III, who upon tasting this crustacean delicacy, exclaimed: "A delicious flash of gustatory lightning."



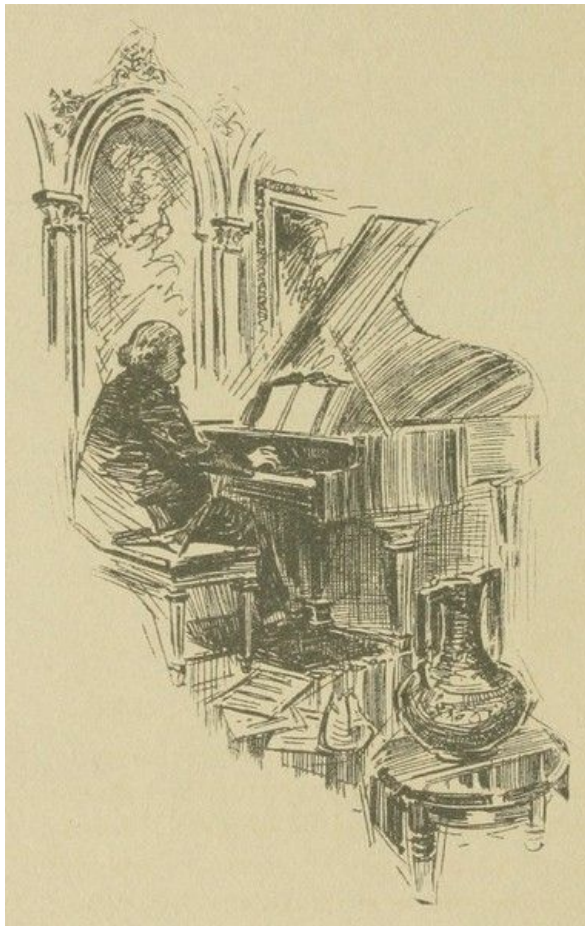
*"The cook produced an ample dish  
Of frizzled sole, those best of fish,  
Embrowned, and wafting through the room,  
All spluttering still, a rich perfume."*

## *Filet of Sole Marguery*

By originating this dish, an obscure restaurant keeper of Paris achieved a place among the immortals of cookery. The high relief of piquant sauce which sole requires, M. Marguery supplied in a flavoring with little mussels in it. So delightfully did it enhance the dish that a distinguished company of bon vivants who happened into the humble Marguery restaurant one night pronounced it a triumph.

The next day M. Marguery awoke to find himself and his sole famous. He soon was on the road to wealth and the dingy little eating shop grew into the magnificent establishment with which visitors to Paris are familiar.

The genius who presides over the range at the Congress is shown at his best in the reproduction of this exquisite culinary treat. The crisp tenderness of the browned sole and the piquant flavor of the sauce is the tribute of an artist to the immortal name of Marguery.



*"Cookery is like matrimony—two things served together should match."*

*—Yuan Mei, the Savarin of China*

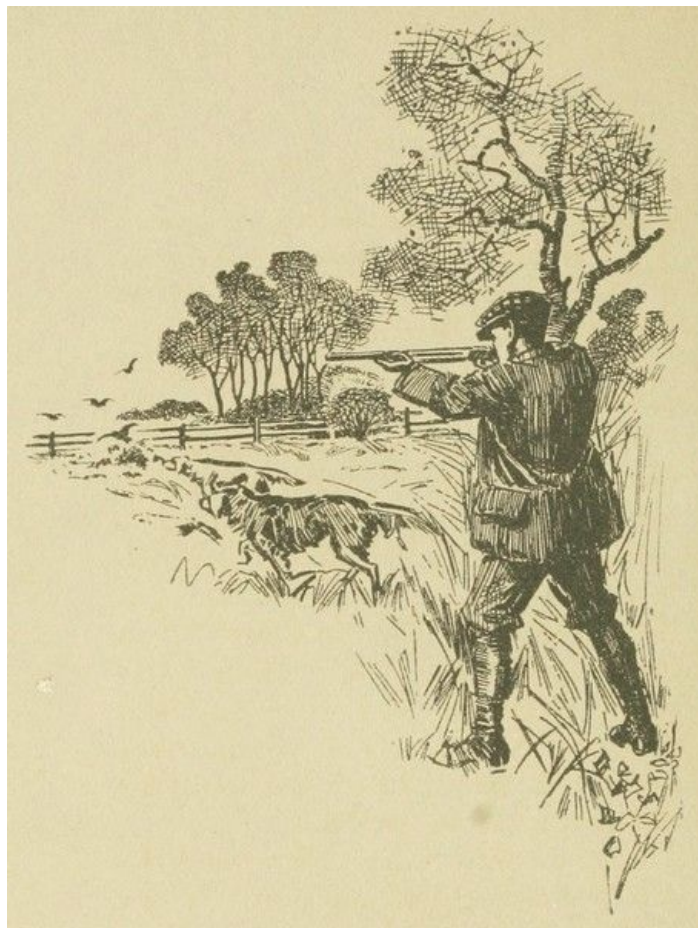
## *Noisettes of Beef Tenderloin a la Rossini*

**R**ossini, a contemporary and friend of Dumas and Balzac—two famous fourchettes—was not only a distinguished composer, but also a cook of ability. This dish of his invention bears witness of his skill and rivals in seductiveness the sweet strains of "The Barber of Seville."

Dumas once complained to Rossini that he had tasted everything eatable and sighed, like Alexander, for new culinary worlds to conquer. Whereupon the musician promised the great romancist that his palate should enjoy a new sensation.

That evening at Rossini's table Dumas sat down before a wonderful dish. Dainty slices of tenderloin were fried in oil, portions of chicken liver sautéed in butter were placed on these, the whole being capped with a slice of truffle and bathed in a delightful Madeira sauce. Dumas—himself a master juggler of the saucepans—pronounced the dish a more glorious creation than any of the composer's operas.

It is the proud boast of the Congress chef that the cookery of this dish requires an artist's delicate perception as truly as does the rendition of Rossini's sweetest arias.



*Lucullus one day ate alone. Whereupon, his chef, thinking that a \$500 dinner would suffice, acted accordingly.*

*At the end of the repast, his face flushed with Falernian, Lucullus sent for the chef and took him to task. There were no fig-peckers and the prized spawn of the sea lamprey was missing.*

*"But seigneur," said the chef, "you were alone."*

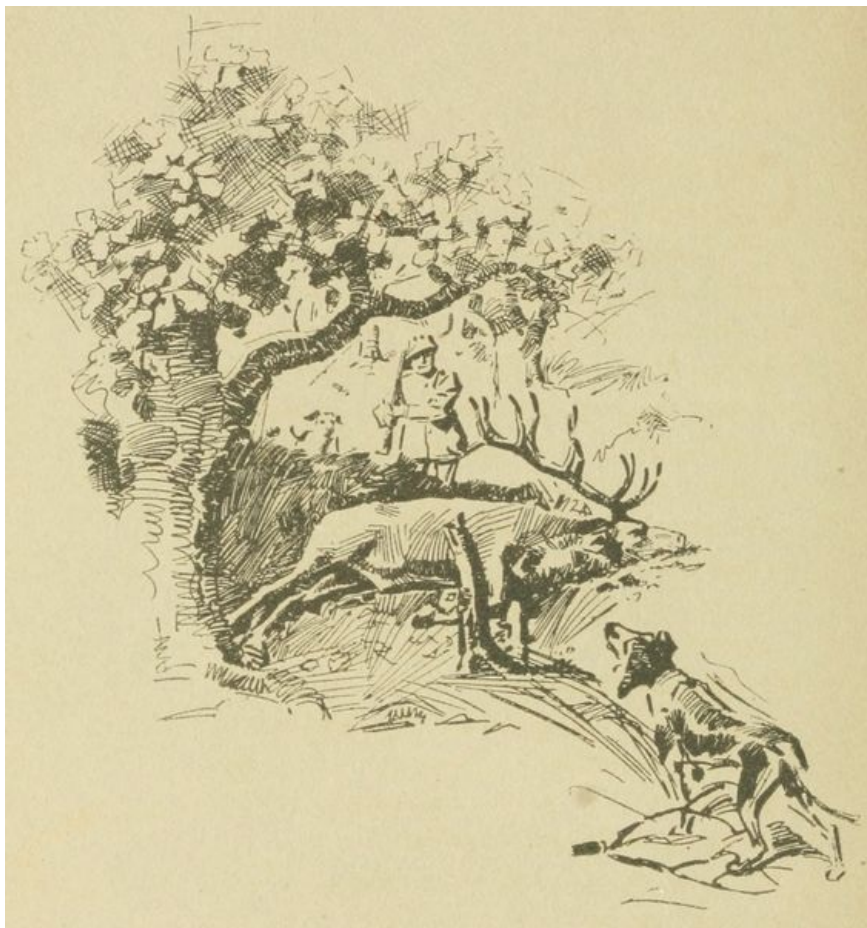
*"At such time," responded his master, "you must remember that Lucullus dines with Lucullus."*

## *Salmi of Partridge*

**S**almi is perhaps the finest preparation of game which historic cookery has bequeathed to us. Like other masterpieces of art, it has never been improved upon. The wonderful sauce brings out the delightful woodland flavor in which the partridge excels—as all sportsmen who love to tramp afield when the woods are covered with a shroud of autumn frost can attest.

In the Congress kitchen this delectable native of the cover is prepared according to the original recipe given to Grimrod de la Reyniere, the famous French epicure by the prior of an English abbey. After the bird is roasted it is cooked in white wine, then immersed in melted butter and served hot with mushrooms and truffles.

When the witty Grimrod first tasted this dish he remarked that one must take care to eat with the fork for fear of devouring a finger should it be baptized with the exquisite sauce.



*"It is difficult to imagine a happier conjunction than the blending of symbols when the arms of a sportsman are quartered with those of a cook."*

*—John Aldergrove*

## *Venison a la Cumberland*

**T**he saddle of venison for centuries has been the symbol of civic luxury in England and is held in highest esteem by epicures. An offspring of wild Nature—fed upon its sweet fruits and vegetation, it exhales the very essence of the forest. In addition venison possesses the admirable virtue of calling forth the rare flavor of port, Bordeaux or Burgundy.

A choice cut from the ruddy flesh of the roebuck—that monarch of the north woods—is skillfully prepared for the oven by the Congress chef. When it has received just the right caress from the flames' heat it is brought to the table smoking hot and served with the exquisite Cumberland sauce—the invention of the gifted Francatelli, officier de bouche to Queen Victoria.

In this sauce, port or Bordeaux is the dominant chord. The translucent ruby red which the currant jelly imparts to the sauce contrasts beautifully with the embrowned roast, thus giving the eyes almost as delightful a treat as the palate.



*"I consider the discovery of a dish which sustains our appetite and prolongs our pleasures as a far more interesting event than the discovery of a star, for we always have stars enough."*

—*Henrion de Pensey*

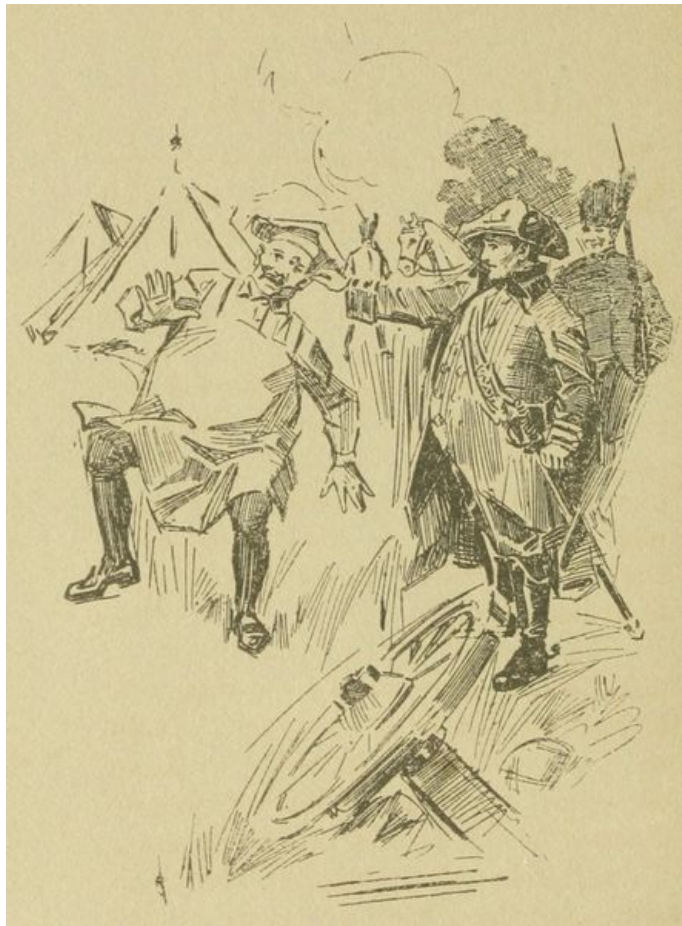
## *Poularde de Portugal*

**I**t is to the friars of Portugal that we are indebted for this famous contribution to the world's store of cookery. When the French troops sacked a Portuguese monastery during the Peninsular war the cook was forced to flee from his sanctorium, leaving behind his precious book of recettes. This the invaders seized, with other spoil, and carried back to Paris.

Here, the culinary grammar fell into the hands of a noted chef, who, one day happened upon the recette for Poularde de Portugal, a dish that took the French capital by storm.

This olden monastic recette is followed at the Congress. A large imported Portugal chicken is cooked until the rich broth attains the consistency of jelly. Then fresh mushrooms are added, the whole being sealed up in a casserole and put in the oven. In this way evaporation is cut off completely and all the delightful flavor stays in the dish.

When the casserole is brought to the dining room and unsealed before the guests, the fragrant aroma that arises attests the merit of the monastery's cookery.



*"Thirteen at table is a number to be dreaded only when there is just enough to go round for twelve."*

*—L'Almanach des Gourmands*

## *Chicken Marengo*

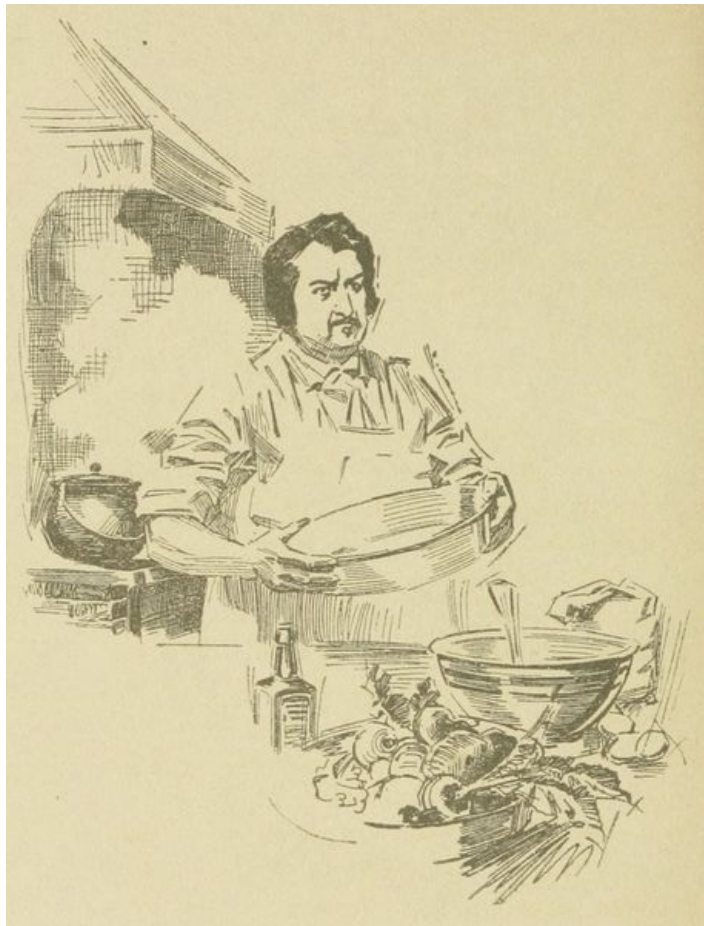
Those whose happiness it is to enjoy this dish at the Congress may well be devoutly grateful to the intrepid chef of Napoleon who created it amid the roar of guns on one of the great battlefields of history.

On the eve of the battle, when the skirmish guns had already begun to boom, the emperor called for his favorite dish—chicken fried in butter. As it happened, the butter could not be found in the confusion, and Napoleon's "Minister of the Interior" was at his wit's end.

Then, inspired by the necessity of the occasion, the chef poured some fresh olive oil into the bottom of a casserole. In this the fowl, moistened with white wine, was sautéed and then served with mushrooms and chopped olives—all in a rich brown gravy.

So exquisite was the dish that the emperor, after achieving a brilliant victory over the Austrians declared the culinary triumph should be known as poulet à la Marengo. Thereafter it was his favorite campaign dish and it is said that this reminder of his days of glory was one of his solaces at lonely St. Helena.





*"Two things are essential in life—to give good dinners and keep well with women."*

*—Talleyrand*

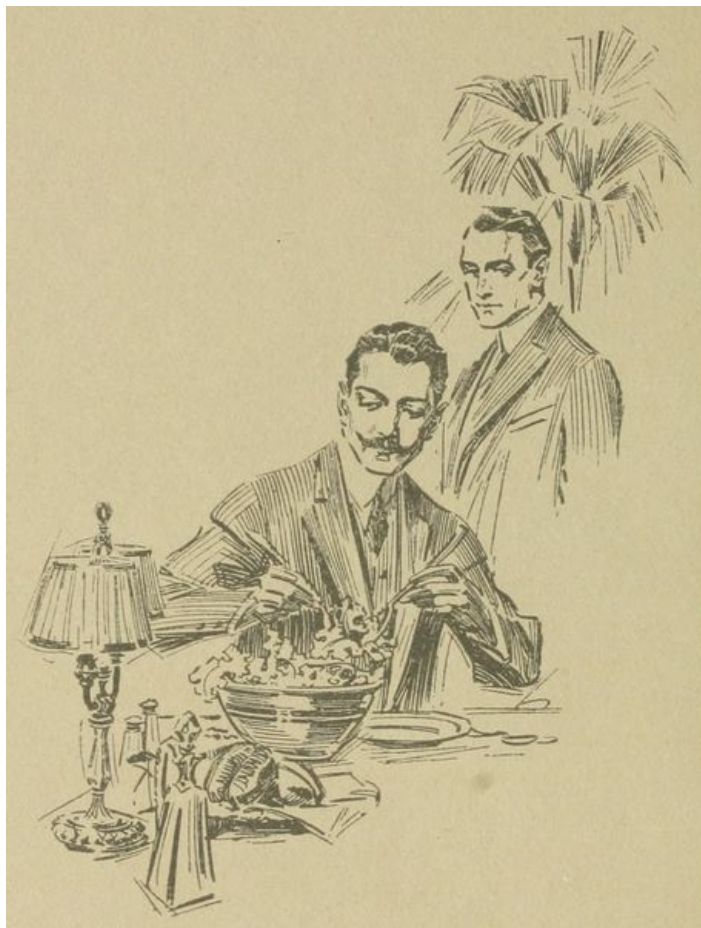
## *Eggs Balzac*

Give the artisan a piece of clay and he mixes it with straw. The result—a brick. Give the same clay to an artist—he kneads his genius into it and produces a work of art. So it is with an egg.

Whether it is to be merely a hodge podge of proteins, fats and solids or a dainty fit for the table of an epicure depends upon whether it has the good fortune to fall into the hands of such a genius as graces the kitchen of the Congress.

In preparing this dish, he breaks the eggs from the shell and places them in the oven until the heat gently broils them. Then they are girdled by ebony-hued truffles, exhaling a delightful fragrance. A libation of savoury tomato sauce, with seasoning ad lib—and the dish is ready for the table.

Well may those who know its delight exclaim that this product of Balzac's saucepans is as worthy a heritage as the most inspired works of his pen.



*"O green and glorious, O herbaceous meat!  
'Twould tempt the dying Anchorite to eat.  
Back to the world he'd turn his weary soul  
And dip his fingers in the salad bowl."*

—*Sidney Smith*

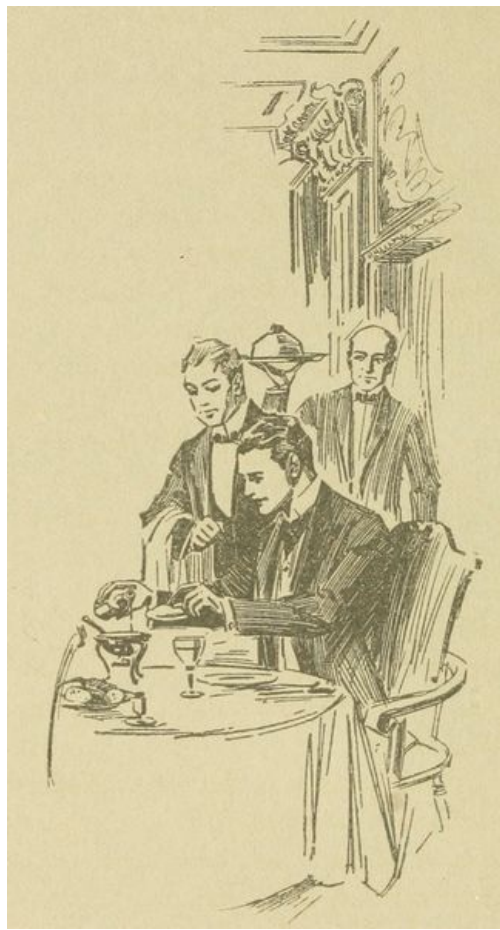
## *Salade Rachel*

**A**t tender offering from Nature's cuisine delightfully designed to promote digestive harmony and to bridge the gap between the entree and the demitasse.

For this dish earth yields such choice treasures as fresh truffles, artichokes, asparagus and celery—all laid in a crisp green basket of lettuce, while over all is spread the golden halo of mayonnaise.

Ah, could you but peek at the Congress artiste de cuisine as he prepares this masterpiece! See him as he skillfully blends the ingredients so that they fall into place like the notes of a beautiful symphony. Truly the salad maker, like the poet, is born, not made.

"Whom the gods love die young," may well be said of salads, as well as of mankind. So that it may be eaten in all its virgin tenderness and crispness Salade Rachel is brought to the table fresh from the hands of its creator—cool, crisp and comforting.



*"Life is so brief that we should not glance either too far backward or forward in order to be happy. Let us, therefore, study how to fix our happiness in our glass and on our plate."*

*—Grimrod de la Reyniere*

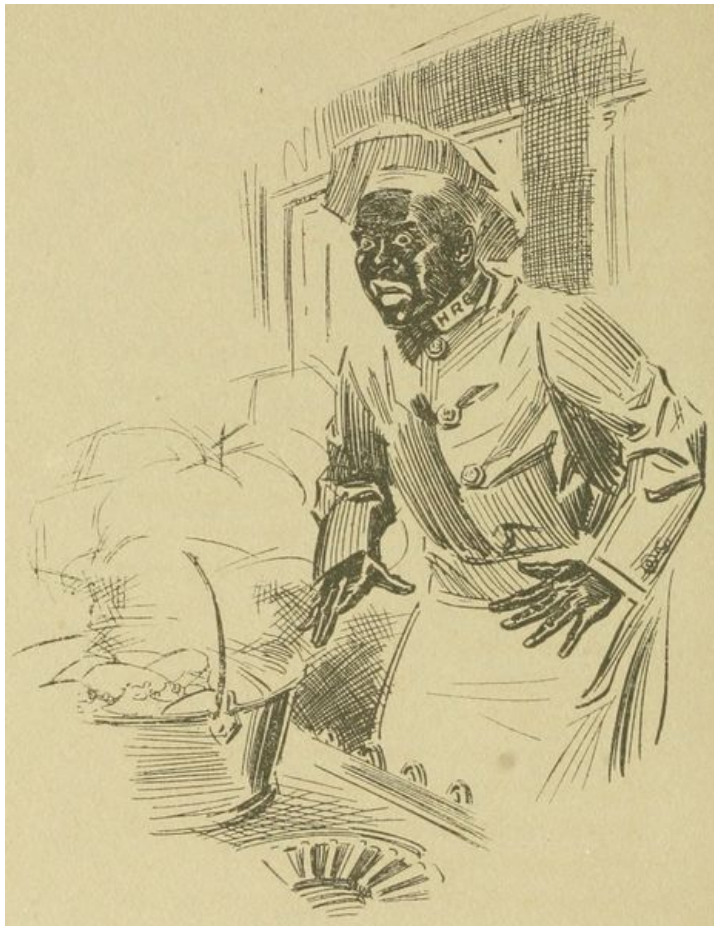
## *Crepes Suzette*

This is one of the most exquisite delicacies which French chefs de cuisine, in their never ceasing search for gastronomic treasures, have bestowed upon those who abhor the commonplace.

Though the Congress chef might regard it as profanation, not to say heresy, crepes suzette may aptly be termed "pancakes de luxe." By the magic touch of the artist, the plain Anglo-Saxon pancake is transformed into the daintiest, most toothsome morsel for the delectation of discriminating palates.

While the rich, thin cakes are being gilded a golden brown upon the hot griddle, a sauce such as only a French master can prepare is being brewed at the table. In a tiny chafing dish, butter is melted and mixed with Grand Marnier cordial, or, if it is preferred, Chartreuse, Kirsch or Grenadine. Then just a suggestion of spice and a fragrant incense arises from the chafing dish as the steaming cakes arrive.

The delicious nectar is poured over the cakes with a liberal hand, they are deftly folded in quarters by the servitor and the feast is ready.



*"To eat understandingly and to drink understandingly are two arts that may not be learned from the day to the morrow."*

*—Alexander Dumas*

## *Potatoes Montgolfier*

This dish is happily christened in honor of the inventor of the balloon, as the story of its origin attests.

A dining car chef one day was frying potatoes in deep fat just as the train rolled into a station. As it happened the chef was a dual personality—master of the sauce pans and porter, all in one. So he took the half-cooked potatoes out of the hot lard, donned his porter's uniform, seized the ever-ready whiskbroom and darted into the chair car.

When he returned the potatoes were put back in the pan. Imagine the amazement of this peripatetic cook when he saw the bewitched pommes de terre swell out for all the world like a balloon when the gas is turned on. Thus was a new dainty added to the world's culinary repertoire.

A note of distinction is added to this dish by the ingenuity of the Congress chef. While the potatoes are attaining a generous rotundity, a dainty nest of thin potato ribbons is woven and in this they are carried to the dining room and served.



*"The turnpike road to people's hearts I find  
Lies through their mouths  
Or I mistake mankind."*

—Dr. Wolcot

## *Tetits Pots de Creme (Vanilla Moka Mexicain)*

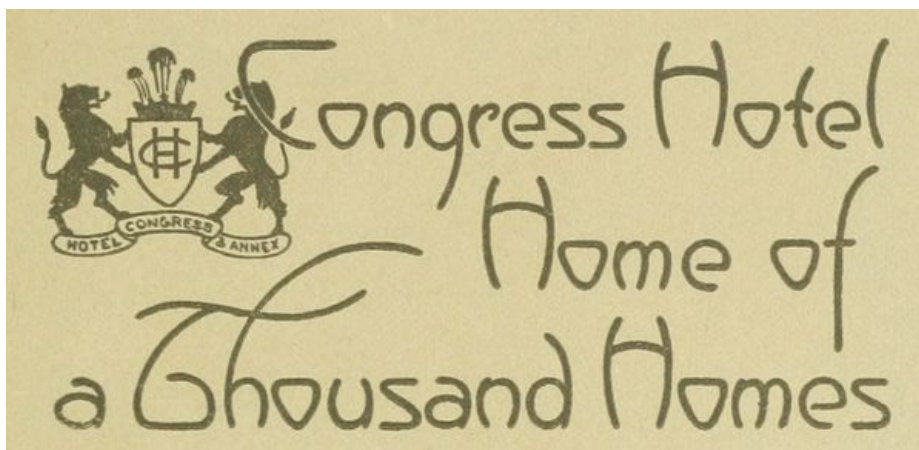
This delightful entremet—a special forte of the Congress chef—fulfills to perfection the mission of the dessert, which is to comfort the stomach by delicate reflex flattery through the palate.

It is a refreshing wave of gastronomic coolness, giving pleasure to the taste without the cloying sense of fullness. Let those whose fortune it is to know the charms of this dainty pay silent tribute to that French chef to whom the world is indebted for the delights of creamy sweets.

The cream is served from a large bowl. Beside each guest's plate is a tiny glass of Kermis, a sweet French cordial. A few drops of the Kermis poured over the cream gives it a delightful flavor and the spoonfuls fall upon the tongue as buoyantly as snowflakes.

Well may those who bring their dinner to an end with this delicacy echo the sweet lines of the poet:

*"The last taste of sweets is sweetest last,  
Writ in remembrance more than things long past."*

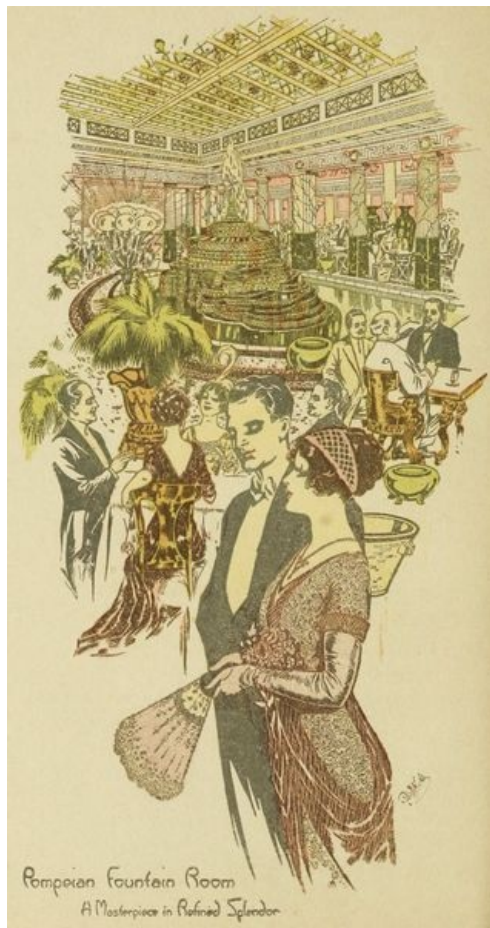


## *We Are Thinking With You*

**A**s you journey toward Chicago the Management of this Home of a Thousand Perfectly Appointed Homes is thinking with you.

Your approach to the Congress Hotel and Annex in Michigan Avenue, the world renowned Boulevard on the beautiful West Shore of Lake Michigan, responds at once to your ideal of location for quiet rest and pure air. Yet within easy walking distance you find yourself in the heart of Chicago's great Business, Shopping and Theater Center.

Your first glance at the Congress Hotel is satisfying. It awakens interest no matter under what conditions you view it. You are impressed as you enter with the atmosphere of perfect, quiet, exclusive service and a warm-hearted hospitality. There is in the policy of the Management of the Congress Hotel a warm-hearted desire to make you feel at home.



Your welcome begins at the curb. Alighting from the taxi you are a personality. The rule of the house is that guests are known by name. You are *you*, and *you* are individual, distinct and personal all during your stay. You feel at once that your visit is anticipated, and every little comfort prearranged especially for you, to the minutest detail.

If you are in Chicago on business you realize that the Congress Hotel and Annex is a business meeting place for busy people. Here is provided every convenience for the transaction of affairs. Commodious rooms for conferences, for conventions and for the display of merchandise. Everything is systematized that business may be transacted with dispatch. But as business is only part of life, this great hotel has equal attractions for the social side of human nature. Private dining-rooms and reception rooms afford adequate opportunity for entertainment.



You choose your room or suite as suits your convenience, assured of quiet, of light and perfect ventilation in any part of every floor. The safety of the Hotel and of all its guests and employes is of first moment. No hotel in the world has more completely safe-guarded precious human lives entrusted to its keeping than the Congress. After safety comes cleanliness, and a careful inspection is an assurance. Your home is not more free from dust, or any uncleanness than this big, quiet, roomy hotel.

Your rooms are large and airy, with commodious closets. The filtered air which flows ceaselessly through your apartments is tempered to just the right temperature throughout the year. Your luggage is unpacked by the deft hand of valet or maid, sent by the Management to assist you in getting settled.





Your rooms and furnishings speak quiet elegance and true home comfort. Your wishes are as completely catered to as if the house was your private residence, and every deferential servant belonged to your personal establishment. It is this courtesy which is the very spirit of hospitality; the reflection of the Management, whose grasp of the essence of service has made the Congress Hotel a veritable Home of a Thousand Homes.

No hotel in the world contains within itself so many features of unusual interest as the Congress Hotel and Annex. A walk from your apartments will convince you instantly. From the Grand Lobby, a magnificent achievement in architecture and decoration, where onyx, mosaic and gold-bossed pilasters uprear a vaulted roof of extreme beauty, you may stroll down the Marble Hallway, famed throughout the civilized world; past Pompeiian Rooms, wherein gleams



the Tiffany Fountain, green crystal, limned with dull gold; past the Pool, by whose quiet side you may place your tiny table and lunch in delicious meditation, meanwhile observing the perfectly appointed grill; past the great Elizabethan Room, a page torn from the Golden Age of English History and on into a private art gallery, perfectly appointed, where the best modern masters gladly hang their chef d'ouvres. Along the opposite side of the Marble Hallway are small shops, exquisite, delicate, inviting inspection to displays of jewelry, millinery, confections, articles of vertu and bric a brac culled from the workshops of the world.

The Grand Dining Room, decorated in the style of Louis XVI is of itself a feature well worthy of detailed description; the German Room—Pomp-Grill Room—than which no hotel in the New World has a more interesting dining room. Upon the walls of the Lobby and in the reception rooms are hung originals from the brushes of such masters as Detaille, Achilles Fould, Grolleron and Chelminski.



Your inspection will not be complete until you have made a trip through the vast kitchens, one of the most interesting features of the great hotel. Here Cleanliness is King! Stainless floors, alabaster walls, abundant air, and everywhere healthfulness and good cheer. Great pantries, sweet storerooms, ample closets lined high with glittering cut glass, with shining silver, with gleaming linen ready for your next call for luncheon or dinner. On every face you see honest pride in the work; immaculate in garb and person, chefs, cooks, pantry-men and lesser serving men prepare with infinite care for your entertainment. Utensils shining, radiant copper, resplendent brass, enamel aluminum and chinaware attest ardent pride in the great institution these men have served so long and so well.



It is for you they toil, this unseen army. Your comfort, your pleasure, your entertainment is the goal of hospitality. It is for this the edifice was raised, for this the art centers of the world were searched, and for this the master craftsmen of seven continents wrought and toiled. For *you*, whether you come today, or tomorrow or next month or next year. All is ready, waiting, waiting—for *you*.

To see the world, see Chicago first. To see Chicago best—you are welcomed to the Congress Hotel.

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