

KEEP YOUR TEMPER!

Let the world wag as it will:
Keep your temper!
If you cannot fill the bill,
Pass it to the man who will;
Keep right on and, better still—
Keep your temper!

Let the world wag as it will:
Keep your temper!
If you cannot climb a hill,
Take a trick, or turn a mill,
Keep right on and, better still—
Keep your temper!

You will get them by and by:
Keep your temper!
Sun and rain will beat the rye;
Summer bring the harvest nigh;
Heaven, at best, ain't very high—
Keep your temper!

—[Atlanta Constitution.]

THE TROUT.

"Scholastique!"

"Monsieur Sourdat."

"Take the utmost pains in cooking the trout—short boil, parsley, thyme, laurel, oil and onions in full strength."

"Are you not afraid to use all the herbs of St. John, Monsieur?"

"No—and above all no vinegar—just a sprinkling of lemon juice. Let the cover be laid at 10.30, and let the dinner be ready at 11 precisely—not at five minutes past 11. Do you hear?"

After having uttered these last injunctions to his cook Judge Sourdat crossed the chief street of Marville with alert steps and gained the Palais de Justice, which was situated back of the Sous Prefecture. Judge Sourdat was about 45 years of age; very active, notwithstanding a tendency to stoutness; square of shoulders; short in stature, with a squeaking voice and a round, close-shaven head; eyes gray, clear and hard under bushy eyebrows; a mouth closely shut, with thin and irritable lips; browned cheeks, surrounded with whiskers badly trimmed; in fact, one of these mastiff faces of which one says: "He can't be good every day." And surely he was not very kind, and he boasted of it. A despot, he used all of his little realm in the Palais. Hard as stone toward the guilty, rough with the witnesses, aggressive with the advocates, he was a veritable furnace who fanned himself constantly into a glow. He was feared like the fire, and he was loved very little.

However, this man of iron had two vulnerable sides. Firstly, he responded to the pastoral name of Nemorin, which exposed him to ridicule, and secondly he was a gourmand. His gastronomy, which was profound, had become a mania.

Living in this little, narrow, sleepy city on the frontier of the Belgian Ardennes, where the pleasures of the table constituted the only diversion of the easy-going burgomasters, the culinary accomplishments of the Judge were cited for ten leagues around. It was said that he ate only fish caught at break of day, because the repose of the night and the absence of emotion rendered the flesh more delicate at that time.

It was he who imagined that to plunge shell fish into boiling milk before cooking them in their ordinary dressing, gave them a richness and a velvety flavor particularly exquisite. On the day that he taught that latest refinement to the priest of St. Victor, the latter could not help blushing, and raising his hands to Heaven he cried: "Too much! This is too much, Judge Sourdat! Surely it is permitted to taste with discretion the good things which divine wisdom has provided, but such gluttony as this borders upon mortal sin, and you will have to render account for it to the good God."

To the scruples of the excellent priest the Judge responded with a misanthropic laugh. It was one of his malign joys to expose his neighbors to temptation, and this very morning the priest was to breakfast with him, the recorder being the only other guest. Judge Sourdat had received, the evening before, a two-pound salmon trout, taken from the beautiful clear water of the rocky Semeis. It was his favorite fish, and had fully occupied the first hours of his morning. He had demonstrated to the cook the superiority of a quick boil to the slow cooking in Geneva or Holland sauce of the books. The trout must be served cold, and in the seasoning in which it was cooked.

This was with him a principle as well as a dogma, as indispensable as an article of the penal code. He continued to repeat it to himself even after having clothed himself in his robe and taken his seat, though he was turning over the leaves of a document bearing upon an important case now pending.

This was a criminal affair, the dramatic details of which contrasted singularly with the epicurean speculations which persisted in haunting the cranium of Judge Sourdat.

The case was thus: During the previous week, at sunrise, there had been found in a thicket of the forest the body of a game-keeper, who had evidently been assassinated, and then concealed among the brambles of a ditch. It was supposed that the crime had been committed by some strolling poacher, but up to the present time there had been elicited no precise evidence, and the witnesses examined had only made the mystery deeper.

The murder had taken place near the frontier, where charcoal burners were at work. The suspicions of the judge had therefore been directed toward them. The depositions thus far had revealed that on the night of the murder these people had been absent from their shanty, and the furnace had remained in the care of a young daughter of the charcoal burners.

Nevertheless, Judge Sourdat had given the order to re-examine one of the men, a stolid boy of twenty, who had once had a falling out with the murdered guard; and the judge had also cited the charcoal burner's daughter to appear before him. Just here the affair commenced to be peculiar. The girl had not responded to the summons. She had evidently hidden, no one knew where. The judge had been obliged to send a constable to look her up, and he was now awaiting the result of the search.

Toward 10 o'clock the door of his

cabinet opened, framing the cocked hat and yellow shoulder belt of the constable.

"Eh! well?" grunted the Judge.

"Eh! well, Judge. I cannot find the girl. She has disappeared. The charcoal burners pretend utter ignorance."

"Hallo!" cried he, seeing her suddenly grow pale and stagger. "What's the matter?"

"My head swims. I cannot see."

She changed color and her temples grew moist.

The Judge consulted his watch. The business was at a standstill; the case could not be called, and he wished to give a glance of oversight to the master of the dining room before the arrival of his guests. He dislodged himself and hurried home.

The pleasant dining room, brightened by the June sun, presented a most attractive aspect with its white woodwork; its gray curtains; its high stove of blue faience with its marble top; and its round table covered with a dazzling white linen cloth, upon which were placed three covers, artistically trimmed. The little rolls of white bread rested tenderly upon the bright red napkins.

Flanked on the right with a lettuce salad, ornamented with nasturtiums; on the left by a cluster of shell-fish from the Meuse, the trout was extended in a platter encircled with parsley. Its blue back cut transversely, revealed its rich salmon color, and it held a full-blown rose in its mouth. By its side, a bowl of court-bouillon was just taking a chill, and exaling abroad a fine odor of thyme which rejoiced the nostrils.

This spectacle somewhat softened the ill-humor of the Judge, and he was calming, little by little, when the hall door opened violently, and he heard in the vestibule a girl's voice which cried, "I tell you I wish to speak to the Judge. He expects me."

At the same time a half-naked arm made the recorder Touchbeuf spin through the open door. He had just arrived, being one of the invited guests. A strange visitor was ushered into him by the dining hall. It was a young girl, almost a child, thin and brown, with uncovered head and with her hair streaming on the wind. Her stockings feet were thrust into men's boots; a gray blouse and a skirt of blue cotton formed her sole attire. Her rapid walking had flushed her cheeks; her gentle brown eyes were sparkling under the uncombed tangles of her chestnut hair; her nostrils were dilating and her parted lips trembled.

"What does all this racket mean?" growled the Judge, scowling.

"It is that little charcoal burner," responded the recorder Touchbeuf.

"She arrived at the Palais just after you left, and she has followed me as far as here, in a state of wild excitement, in order that you may take her deposition."

"Eh!" groaned the Judge. "You are in a great hurry, my girl, after keeping me waiting three days. Why did you not come sooner?"

"I had my reasons," she said, casting hungry eyes upon the table.

"We can better appreciate your reasons later," replied the Judge, furiously at the interruption. "Mean while we can listen to your report."

"Too late, Monsieur le Cure!" growled the Judge. "There is no more trout."

"I had my reasons," she said, casting hungry eyes upon the table.

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