

5 minutes, and add the vinegar and the sugar. Cook until the ice turns to a syrup.

Can be served hot or cold.

#### POLLERIPPIENE (Stuffed Onions)

Make a stuffing of chopped parsley, garlic, anchovies, a little ham, a dozen black olives, and a handful of breadcrumbs. Cook the peeled onions in boiling water for 15 minutes. Peel them, cut them in half, and take out the centre, leaving a ring of three or four layers. Fill these with the stuffing, pour a little oil in the top of each, and bake them in a slow oven for an hour. A typically southern Italian dish.

#### PIULE PIENNE (Piedmontese Stuffed Onions)

Use medium-sized onions, 4 macaroons (about  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb.), a slice of white bread about 1 in. thick, without the crust, a little milk or stock, a tablespoonful of sultanas, 3 tablespoonsful of Parmesan, salt, pepper, nutmeg, ground cloves, cinnamon, 1 egg.

Boil the onions for 15 minutes, without peeling them. When they are cooled peel off the skins. Extract the core of the onion, and then working from the outside proceed to separate the onion into layers, so that you have a number of hollow rings of different sizes. The process is perfectly simple, provided the onion is sufficiently soft.

To make the stuffing, crumble the macaroons and pound them with the bread which has been softened in milk or stock, add the onion and spices (not too heavily) and the cheese, the chopped pieces of 2 or 3 of the onions, the sultanas, and the beaten egg.

Put a little of the stuffing into each onion ring (not too much, or it will be stodgy) and add a little piece of butter to each one. Bake in a moderate oven for about 45 minutes. They can be eaten either hot or cold. If very large onions are used cut them into half rings before separating them into rings. Made with small onions, so that each little ring is merely a mouthful, this is good food with skins.

The ingredients for the stuffing sound a very odd mixture, and the dish is obviously a survival from the days when a mixture of sweet and savoury, with plenty of spices, was perfectly normal. The

resulting flavour is rather good. *Sciule piene* is the Piedmontese for *cipolle ripiene* (stuffed onions).

#### CAVOLI IN AGRODOLCE (Sour-Sweet Cabbage)

Wash a large green cabbage and cut it into thin strips, discarding the hard parts of the stalks in the centre of the leaves.

In a roomy saucepan, heat a little olive oil or bacon fat, or a mixture of the two. In this sauté a small onion. When it is golden add 2 or 3 large ripe peeled tomatoes (or a small spoonful of concentrated purée diluted with a little water). When the tomatoes are soft, add the cabbage. Stir it round; add salt and pepper and a large tablespoonful of wine vinegar. Let it simmer for 20 minutes, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon. Five minutes before serving stir in a tablespoonful of soft white sugar.

#### VERZE RIPIENE (Stuffed Cabbage Leaves)

Blanch white cabbage leaves in boiling salted water for 5 minutes.

On each leaf put a small spoonful of any stuffing you fancy, as for the stuffed *zucchini* (p. 267); roll up the leaves, squeeze them in the hand so that they remain firmly rolled up, and cook them in oil or broth for about an hour.

Stuffed cabbage leaves and stuffed *zucchini* are often served together as a way of using up cold meat.