



The Curry Cook's Assistant: or, Curries, How to Make Them in England in Their Original Style

Daniel Santiagoe

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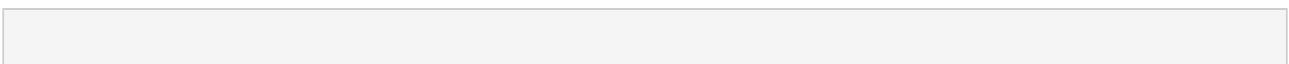
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Daniel Santiago

“Everybody who likes Curry, and who can get it (the pamphlet, not the Curry), should invest in a little pamphlet by ‘Daniel Santiago, son of Francis Daniel, butler and fiddler, of Colombo, Ceylon, and the Ceylon Court, Royal Jubilee Exhibition, Liverpool.’ It is written in delightful pigeon-English (or whatever other bird may be more appropriate to Ceylon’s isle), is quite unpretentious, avows the author’s very legitimate, and, indeed, laudable desire to ‘make a small fortune’ by its sale, and contains admirable receipts. Mr. Santiago is much less cynical than the apocryphal Mrs. Glasse. He says, after recommending the more excellent way of the Curry Stone, ‘The best and easy way is to buy from your respected grocers, which, I should say, ought to be of two colours—one is brown and the other is yellow, and the red is cayenne pepper (if required, hot curries).’ He is a little plaintive about mulligatawny. ‘Why English people always spell this word wrong? Everybody knows this—mollagoo, ‘pepper;’ tanney, ‘water.’ So the reformers who call it ‘mulligatunny’ are just as bad as we devotees of mumpsimus and mulligatawny ourselves. We note with special pleasure a receipt for ‘chicken moley’—evidently the same genus as that ‘mollet’ which puzzled Mrs. Clarke. And all the prescriptions are interesting. ‘Maldive fish’ seems to take the place of ‘Bombay duck’ in these southern regions, and the number of Vegetable Curries is particularly noteworthy. Nobody need think from the specimens we have given that Mr. Santiago is unintelligible. His English may be ‘pigeon,’ but it is a much more easily digestible tongue than the high and mighty gobble-gobble of some of our own professors of style and matter.” -Saturday Review

“It is only fair to point out that the English of this little book is not “English as she is spoken,” but represents the expression of Santiago in its native costume—it is Tamil Anglicised by Santiago himself. As Santiago says, “I like broken English, because ladies gentlemen like that.” The author is a native of Trichinopoly. His grandfather and uncle were distinguished drummers in Indian infantry regiments—in other words, they were masters of the tom-tom. He has lived all his life in Ceylon,[2] and for the last seven years—that is, since he was sixteen—has been in the service of English residents, of whom he appears to have nothing but pleasant recollections. It would seem that this will be the case in his experience of England, whither he has come with others as waiter at the Ceylon Tea Rooms in the Liverpool Exhibition—though he told me with much modesty that ‘people were very kind, but he supposed the Ceylon servants were a novelty.’

“It is, to say the least, highly creditable to Santiago that, with many duties to perform, and these amid the distracting influences of our Western civilization, he should have compiled this useful little guide to the art of Curry cooking. The spirit of Brillat-Savarin and of Soyer is stronger than the ephemeral attractions of an exhibition. Let us hope Santiago’s enterprise will be more lasting than these; that it will achieve its aim in popularizing Ceylon Curries in this country; and that his ‘Book on Curries’ will pass through many editions, and bring him the “little fortune” he deserves.” -A. Egmont Hake, author of “General Gordon’s Journal at Khartoum;” Editor of “The Story of Chinese Gordon,” etc., etc.; Commissioner of War Trophies, Royal Jubilee Exhibition, Liverpool, 1887



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