THE HOME.

CHRISTMAS DAINTIES.

The city housekeeper may order sweet meats for the holidays, from French confectioners, and delight the little ones with bonbons, fancy cakes, etc., with but little trouble to herself, but the rural or village housewife has no such conveniences, and must prepare all such dainties at home, and we do not know but in the end her pleasure as well as that of her family is greater in having everything for this blessed home festival home-made. Each member's individual taste may be consulted, and pleased with only the exactness that a mother's love can dictate. As all housekeepers have receipts for ordinary Christmas goodies—such as mince pies, doughnuts, plum cakes, sugar candies, etc., we will give something novel, for the benefit of mothers who desire to surprise and please large and small members of the family.

CHRISTMAS GAME PIE.—Make paste for meat pie, have smooth and stiff, fold in a damp cloth and lay on ice for one hour. Line a raised pie dish with the paste, rolled thin. Rub all over well with butter. Put a top on, ornament the centre with leaves and flowers of the pastry, set in the oven and bake. When done, take out, remove the top crust, brush the inside with broken egg, set back in oven until glazed. For filling for the pie, take partridges, rabbits, and other small game, and cut up in pieces, put in a frying pan with butter, and fry until brown. Then take up, put in a saucepan with some rich soup stock, mushrooms to flavor, a tablespoonful each of walnut and tomato catsup, a wine glass of currant jelly, the juce of a lemon, half a dozen cloves, with salt and pepper, let simmer until very tender. Let cool, pour in the crust, with the gravy, cover the top with aspic jelly, and lay on the upper crust. This pie will keep some time in cold weather, and is convenient and delicious.

CHICKEN SALAD, FOR A CHRISTMAS TEA.—Cut the white meat of a cold boiled chicken in nice thin slices. Prepare a dressing of two tablespoonfuls of finely mixed boiled ham, three hard boiled eggs, two tablespoons of minced spiced tongue, half a dozen spiced oysters, and one sardine, freed from skin and bones, mix well until a smooth paste, add a teaspoonful of tarragon vinegar, and a few drops of onion juice. Stir in two tablespoonfuls of mayonnaise sauce, in which dissolve a tablespoonful of gelatine. Dip each slice of chicken in the mixture and set in a cool place until well coated. Line a mould with chicken jelly, place the slices around, ornament with stripes of pickled beets, and chopped green pickle, pour in more jelly, and set on ice. When ready to serve, have a bed of celery and parsley leaves in a flat glass dish, carefully turn out the salad on it, cover the top with thinly sliced lemon.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING.—Wash and dry a pound of currants, stone a pound of raisins. Mix together dry a quarter of a pound of sifted flour, a quarter of a pound of stale bread crumbs, a quarter of a pound of brown sugar, a pound of finely chopped suet, and half a pound of cut candied orange peel, grate in half a nutmeg and one lemon. Beat five eggs, to which add a teacup of molasses, pour over the other ingredients, and mix thoroughly. Pack in a well greased mould and boil ten hours. Serve with hard sauce.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING (COLD).—Cover half a box of gelatine with a little cold water, and let soak fifteen minutes. pour over a pint of boiling water, add the juice of three lemons, four oranges, and a pint of sugar, stir until dissolved, and strain. Divide the mixture, colour a third of it a light pink with fruit colouring, put in a shallow round dish, and set aside to cool. Pour the uncoloured jelly in a pudding mould, set on ice to harden, gash slightly on top with a penknife, pour in the coloured jelly, which should be cold but not hard. Set on ice for three hours. Put a pint of rich milk on to boil. Beat the whites of four eggs stiff, add half a teacup of sugar, and mix lightly. Pour over the boiling milk, and let stand one minute. Skim off and put to drain. Beat the yolks of the eggs with half a teacup of sugar, and stir in the boiling milk. Take from the fire, flavor, and pour in a bowl to cool. When ready to put on the table, turn the jelly out of the mould on a large glass dish, pour the custard around it; drop the cooked meringue in spoonfuls over the custard. Cut the pink jelly in bits, and place over the pudding here and there. This is a very ornamental Christmas dish.

ALMOND CREAM.—Melt half an ounce of gelatine in a gill of water, add three ounces of sugar, and the juce of a lemon with a wine glass of currant jelly; mash five ounces of almond paste, add to the mixture, put in a bowl, set in boiling water and stir until dissolved. Set aside to cool. Whip three cups of thick cream until solid. Line a jelly mould with currant jelly, pour the mixture in the centre and set on ice.

CHRISTMAS PARTY JELLY. — (A pretty dish for a children's Christmas party.) Cover two ounces of gelatine with cold water and let soak one hour, add a pound of sugar, and a pint of boiling water, stir until the sugar is dissolved, and add a pint and a half of cranberry juice. Strain and pour in a shallow square pan and set on ice. Cover two ounces more of gelatine with cold water, and let soak, pour over a quart of boiling water, a pound of sugar, the juice of four lemons, with the grated yellow of the rinds, stir until dissolved, strain in a shallow pan and set to cool. When firm and hard cut in little blocks, and heap on a large flat glass dish, the red and yellow jellies alternately. Set the dish in the centre of the table in a bed of holly leaves and berries.

CUSTARD WITH CANDIED FRUITS. — Boil a pint of cream with a teacup of sugar, flavor with strawberry extract, and color pink. Beat twelve eggs, strain them, and pour the hot (not boiling) cream over them, add two tablespoonfuls of gelatine dissolved in warm water. Beat until cold. Put pieces of candied cherries, grapes and apricots around the bottom and sides of a mould, pour jelly over them, and set to cool. Freeze the custard soft, take out the jelly from the centre of the mould, and put the custard in, cover the top with chopped bits of the candied fruits. Put over more custard and more fruit until the mould is full. Set on ice until wanted—if eight or ten hours, it will be all the better.

CANDIED FANCY ORANGES.—Take a dozen firm oranges. Peel the outside of the skin off as thin as possible. Mark off in quarters, and cut out every other one. Pass the knife around the inside and remove the pulp. With a spoon scoop out the lower part or bowl which is left, drop in water, and boil gently long enough to soften the peel, then boil in thick syrup until clear, let them remain in the syrup over night. Then take up, drain, and let dry. Sprinkle with granulated sugar and fill with orange jelly. Set each one to itself on a large flat dish, and pour over the syrup.

CHRISTMAS CAKE.—Cream one pound of butter and sugar together, sift in one pound of flour, beat ten eggs separately and mix in. Blanch two pounds of almonds, seed one pound of raisins, and chop half a pound of citron. Grease a large cake pan, put in a layer of cake batter, then a layer of the raisins, almonds and citron; continue until the pan is full, putting the batter on top. Bake in a moderate oven two hours. When cold ice in fancy designs, and ornament with a wreath of holly.

SANTA CLAUS CAKE. — Three cups of sugar, half a cup of butter, the whites of eight eggs, one pint of sifted flour, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, and a tablespoonful of rose water. Rub the butter and sugar to a cream, add the flour and baking powder, mix in a smooth batter, add a small teacup of sweet milk, and the flavoring, lastly stir in the stiffly beaten whites of the eggs. Bake in jelly cake pan. For filling make an icing of the beaten whites of four eggs, three cups of sugar flavored with vanilla,—divide in half—in one portion mix a teacup of chopped almonds, in the other the same of finely chopped figs. Spread alternately on the layers of cake. Ice the top in fancy icing, and put in the centre a little coloured sugar figure of Santa Claus (which can be bought at the confectioner's).

ALMOND CAKES.—Boil half a pint of new milk, dissolve one pound of sugar in it, take off the fire, and set to cool, flavor with lemon. Rub half a pound of butter into a pound and a half of flour, and a pound and a quarter of finely grated orange paste, put a pinch of soda in the boiled milk, and mix with the flour, beat three eggs, and mix in a smooth firm paste; if not sufficiently stiff, add more flour. Make out in little cakes about a quarter of an inch thick. Cover the bottom of a large baking pan with well buttered paper, lay the little cakes on, and bake till pale brown.

MACAROONS.—Pound a pound of blanched almonds until a smooth paste, mix in a pound and a half of powdered sugar and the beaten whites of seven eggs. Mix all together until smooth and firm. Butter sheets of writing paper, cover the bottom of the pan with them, and drop the paste on, in small teaspoonfuls. If it should be too thin, add more sugar. If too stiff more white of the egg. Bake twenty minutes in a moderate oven.

CHRISTMAS GINGER CAKES.—Rub half a pound of fresh butter into a scant pound of flour, beat four eggs, add with a pound of powdered sugar, and grated peel of a lemon, and a tablespoonful of extract of ginger (Dr. Price's is the best for cakes.) Mix all together well. Roll thin, cut in small oval cakes, sift with powdered sugar, and bake in a slow oven until pale brown.

DAINTY CUP CAKES.—Beat six ounces of butter, six ounces of flour, and four ounces of sugar together with the yolks of four eggs, add a teaspoonful of orange flower extract, and the grated rind of a lemon; beat well, and stir in lightly the beaten whites of the eggs. Butter little gem pans or small moulds, and fill with the batter. Cover the tops with spilt almonds and powdered sugar.

Other Plum Puddings.

The best pudding bag is made of partly worn ticking. A tin mold can be used in every case if you have one. All boiled pudding's must be plunged at once into boiling water, and the water must never for a moment be allowed to cease boiling. To dish a pudding, plunge it for a moment into cold water and it will turn out without breaking. If these simple rules are followed there can be no mishap. Many cooks let a plum pudding stand over night before boiling. It develops the richness of the fruit and spices, and they seem to amalgamate more thoroughly.

Dr. Ketchener's plum pudding is of medium size and richness. Mix six ounces each of finely chopped suet and stoned and chopped Malaga raisins, eight ounces of currants washed and dried; three ounces each of fine bread crumbs and flour, four ounces of sugar, a half teaspoonful of cinnamon and half as much mace, one ounce of candied lemon peel and half an ounce of citron, both shredded. Beat three eggs with half a pint of milk and half a teaspoonful of salt, and add this to the rest of the ingredients. Mix thoroughly. Wring a pudding cloth out of hot water, flour it inside, pour in the pudding and boil six hours.

A plainer plum pudding is made with half a pound each of flour, suit and raisins; four ounces of sugar, half a pint of milk, two eggs, and a teaspoonful of mixed spices. Boil two and a half hours.

Plum Pudding Without Eggs.—Chop half a pound of suet and mix it with one pound of flour, one pound of stoned raisins, four ounces of bread crumbs, a gill of molasses, a pint of milk, a grated nutmeg and half a teaspoonful of cinnamon. Boil four hours.

Nonpareil Plum Pudding.—Beat seven eggs, the whites and yelks separately. Add half a teaspoonful each of nutmeg, cinnamon and salt, and grated rind of two lemons, half a pound each of raisins and currants, and half a pound of citron and candied lemon peel sliced thin and mixed, one pound of fine bread crumbs, three-quarters of a pound of suet, the juice of a lemon and two glasses each of brandy and sherry. Beat very smooth and boil six hours.

A Small Plum Pudding.—Small as this pudding is a small family will be able to put away half of it for New Year's day. Pour a large cup of milk over a pound of bread crumbs and let them remain for an hour; beat in four ounces of sugar and half a pound each of suet and raisins; add the grated rind and juice of a lemon and four beaten eggs. Boil five hours.

Pudding Sauce.—Put two pounds of powdered sugar, one egg and half a cup of butter into a cake bowl and beat them until like ice cream. If you have a Keystone egg beater this can be made in three minutes.

Enjoyable Parlor Games.

A pretty and appropriate game for Christmas gathering is well named "The Yule Log." It is simple and creates any amount of merriment. If the hostess desires to invite a certain number of guests, to insure success, each one must know the name of the other. Each guest then provides his or herself with some trifle, and this is wrapped in paper, accompanied by a suitable couplet in rhyme, and addressed to one of the guests; this in turn is enveloped in another wrapper with the name of another person subscribed on i, and so on until all the guests have been included—that is, if the company is not too large. Each person takes his offering to the house and they are all piled upon the table. Each one picks out the parcel addressed with his name and passes it on to the next one, until finally the present reaches the one for whom it was intended. The opening of the bundles is prolific of great amusement and the poetry is received with great applause.

Perhaps the most improving and delightful of games is called "The Newspaper Editor." To play this it is necessary to provide paper and pencils, which each person keeps himself.

Every one is expected to write an essay, a piece of poetry, or do some imaginary reportorial work, such as describing a fire, a dog fight, a murder, or anything that strikes his fancy. No names should be signed, and when the articles are finished they must be folded up and laid on the editor's desk. He reads each of the effusions in turn, and the fun consists in guessing the indentity of the author.

A game which requires little skill, and which can be indulged in by young and old, is played as follows: Let the company place themselves all in a row, while on a table is set a pack of cards; the nearest person to the table takes the top card off, and as he looks at it says, "ten of hearts," or whatever card it may be, at the same time handing it to his neighbour, who repeats in turn the name of the card and passes it on to the next one, etc. The first person keeps taking up the top card and passing it on until the last person is reached and each one is pronouncing a different thing. Finally there is almost a babel of sound, which sets every one laughing and reminds one of nothing as much as a cage of chattering parrots. Should any one fail to tell his card correctly he must pay a forfeit.

Indian Christmas.

Away up on the northern shore of Lake Winnipeg is Norway House, one of the oldest and largest stations of the Hudson Bay Company. To this point the Indians of a large territory bring their furs for sale or exchange. In the winter season Norway House has been a lively place for many years, especially during the holidays, when the company has been accustomed to provide some appropriate entertainment for its Indian hunters and trappers. A Christmas dinner given here more than forty years ago is described by Mr. Ballantyne.

It was with something like awe that I entered the room, and beheld two long rows of tables, with puddings, pies, tarts, stews, hashes, and vegetables of all shapes, sizes and descriptions smoking thereon. I feared for the Indians, although they can stand a great deal in the way of repletion; moderation being, of course, out of the question, with such abundance of good things placed before them.

A large shell was sounded after the manner of a bugle, and all the Indians of the village walked into the room and seated themselves, the women on one side of a long table, the men on the other. Mr. Evans stood at the head, and asked a blessing; and then commenced a work of demolition, the like of which has not been seen since the foundation of the world!

The pies had strong crusts, but the knives were stronger; the paste was hard and the interior tough, but Indian teeth were harder and Indian jaws tougher; the dishes were gigantic, but the stomachs were capacious, so that ere long numerous skeletons and empty dishes alone graced the board.

One old woman, of a dark-brown complexion, with glittering black eyes and awfully long teeth, set up in the wholesale line, and demolished the viands so rapidly that those who sat beside her, fearing a dearth in the land, began to look angry; fortunately, however, she gave in suddenly, while in the middle of a venison pasty, and reclining languidly backwards, with a sweetly contented expression of countenance, while her breath came thickly through her half-opened mouth, she gently fell asleep,—and thereby, much to her chagrin, lost the tea and cakes which were served out soon afterwards by way of dessert.

When the seniors had finished, the juveniles were admitted in a crowd, and these soon cleared away the remnants of the feast.

Christmas Cooking.

THE TURKEY.—Select a fat, tender turkey. After it has been nicely dressed fill with the following stuffing. One pound of nice light bread finely crumbled. Mix with it half a pound of nice butter, salt, black pepper and a salt spoonful of cayenne pepper, also two stalks of celery finely minced. To this add two quarts of the best oysters carefully picked of shells and with only enough of their liquor to moisten the bread well. Fill the turkey perfectly full and sew it up carefully. Fill the hollow in the breast from which the craw was removed and sew that up also. Rub with salt and pepper all over, dredge with flour and set in the oven to roast. Place it on its breast, so that the back may brown first and the breast last. Baste frequently with the gravy in the pan which should consist of one pint of water and one of oyster liquor strained from the shell. When done, the turkey should be a rich brown. The gravy should be carefully skimmed. If not quite thick enough, cream a little flour smooth with butter and stir into it, letting it cook for four or five minutes longer. The liver pounded perfectly smooth adds a delightful flavor to it. This addition of liver was the secret of a once famous cook's more famous gravies. Turkey roasted this way is charming hot or cold.

If you do not like oyster stuffing, use two pounds of bread crumbs, half a pound of butter, salt and pepper to taste, two level tablespoonsful of finely minced onion, and a pint of rich sweet cream to moisten the stuffing, more if necessary, for it should on no account be stiff or dry.

ENGLISH PLUM PUDDING. For an ordinary sized pudding put three quarters of a pound of finely grated bread crumbs into a bowl with three quarters of a pound of beef suet, chopped, four ounces of flour, dried and sifted, a teaspoonful of salt, a pound of well cleaned currants, a pound of large raisins cut in half and stoned, half a pound of mixed candied peel cut into very narrow strips or tiny dice, a tablespoonful of moist sugar, and a teaspoonful of mixed spice. Mix these ingredients thoroughly than stir in eight large, fresh, well-beaten eggs and, if approved of, a glass of brandy. If required a little milk may be added, but the preparation must just be barely moistened—not in the least sloppy. Turn the mixture, when ready, into a well buttered pudding mould, tie a good stout pudding cloth over the top, and plunge it into plenty of fast boiling water. Boil hard for seven or eight hours—or even longer—then turn out carefully on to hot dish. Insert a tiny sprig of holly—with berries on if possible—in the centre, sift fine white sugar thickly over all to imitate a fall of snow, and serve with a little brandy sauce, or rich melted butter, poured round the base, and accompanied by more sauce in a tureen. If these puddings—we often make six of eight at a time—are made about a month before being required they will be all the richer and better. All that is needed is to give them a couple of hours brisk boiling previous to serving. In the interim the puddings must be kept in a cool airy place, hanging by a knot, made by gathering up the four corners of the pudding cloth and tying them firmly together.

Christmas Day.

Christmas is the festival of the year, and churlish indeed are they who do not find pleasure in the glow and brightness of its manifold enjoyments. It is preeminently the one day of the year when young and old meet together on an equal plane. The pains and achings of old age are forgotten in the joyousness of the day, and Tiny Tims are everywhere among the happiest of God's own children. Depressed in spirits, indeed, must be that person who cannot be happy on this festive day of all the world! Wherever civilization extends, there mirth and good cheer reigns supreme, and if it is Winter outside, it is Summer inside the home and within the hearts of all. Innocent joy and exultation triumphs over all, and hearts old with years of burdens, are made again young and light by the air of sociability that pervades everything. While to all of us, Christmas has its charms, its significances and its pleasures, it is essentially the feast of the children. Their young hearts long for its coming, while their little feet keep time to its mirth and music. The mysteries that Philosophy and Religion have unravelled as bearing upon the outward observance of the day that have no meaning to the children. They know not of them. Enough for them to believe in the reality of the Christ-child, in the merry-eyed and white-bearded patron saint that comes to them armladen with gifts from fairy-land; enough for them to hear the jingle of the reindeer bells, to picture the shadow of Santa Claus, as they lie half awake and half dreaming, flit across their cosy little room, and then rise in the morning to see the gifts that love and midnight brought them. Happy indeed is that childish faith! For the children first, and then for ourselves, let Christmas ever be remembered in our homes. Let the bells ring, the yule-log blaze and crackle on the hearth, and the holly gleam on the wall. Weary centuries have come and gone since the star looked down on the plains of Bethlehem, empires have passed away, suns have risen and set, monarchs and monarchies have lived and crumbled to dust, but the earth is still young, and love and laughter are still left us. Let us recognize all the customs appropriate to the day, and with present, feast and carol impress it upon the minds of our children so that it may pass down from generation to generation to bless the children of our children, and that come after them.

Let Christmas Stand for Pleasure.

Christmas is the preacher who emphasizes the fact that the religion which it celebrates is adapted to human nature. Horace is called the laureate of the worldly, of the epicurean, of the pagan who would eat and drink in view of to-morrow. The gay adage *dum vivimus* is cited with a shudder as the gospel of pleasure. Christmas was hunted in the Puritan parliament as a kind of god of pleasure who was only a masked devil. It was confounded by Governor Bradford with the Belly god. But why, said Charles Wesley, as he sweetly sang—why give all the good tunes to Satan? The sweet singer might have enlarged his view and his question. Why give Satan any of the good things? Why, above all, let him have Christmas, as Andromeda was abandoned to the dragon of the sea? Let Christmas stand for pleasure, and for the reason that it is especially the Christmas day. Then Christianity drops her weeds and smiles. Then the whole world takes up the refrain,

"Religion never was designed
To make our pleasure less."

And even Dr. Doddridge comes singing in,

"I live in pleasure when I live to Thee."

The doctor must not fly his own logic. Not to live in pleasure is not to live to Thee. Pure pleasure it must be, no doubt, but that is the pleasure embodied in Christmas.

If we were to fancy a wholly Christianized world, it would be a world inspired by the spirit of Christmas—a, bright friendly, beneficent, generous, sympathetic, mutually helpful world. A man who is habitually mean, selfish, narrow, is a man without Christmas in his soul. The child of good fortune, like Miss Messenger in Besant's *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, whose chief purpose is to share her good fortune with others, and to teach them that love and sympathy are the keys of life, keeps Christmas all the year. Besant calls his tale what he says his friends call it, an impossible story. Then Christianity is a dream, for Miss Messenger is simply a Christian.

If Besant's friends were right and the story is impossible, let us cling to Christmas all the more as a day of the spirit which in every age some souls have believed to be the possible spirit of human society. The earnest faith and untiring endeavour which see in Christmas a forecast are more truly Christian, surely, than the pleasant cynicism which smiles upon it as the festival of a futile hope. Meanwhile we may reflect that from good-natured hopelessness to a Christmas world may not be farther than from star dust to a solar system.—*Harper's Magazine.*

A Valuable Lesson.

Sunday School Teacher—"And when the wicked children continued mocking the good prophet two she bears came out of the mountain and ate up forty of the wicked children. Now, boys, what lesson does this teach us?"

Jimpsy Primrose—"I know."

Teacher—"Well, Jimpsy?"

Jimpsy Primrose—"It teaches us how many children a she bear can hold."

"So you don't take Jones' house?" "No he wantnd two hundred dollars a month, and we split on that." "I see—you were rent asunder."

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Ring the glad tidings, the Saviour is born!
Ring it, ye bells on this glorious morn!
And perched on the branch of my Christmas tree,
A motley assemblage of maidens see.
Know you what tale to their ear there tells,
Your loud merry clanging, ye Christmas bells?

Then list! To proud Maud looking tenderly down
On jewels that flash on her silken gown,
To long braided Gretchen, content with her share
Of chains, though not gold, yet of sausages rare,
Your chiming weaves sweetest and fairest of spells,
Bears whispers prophetic of "wedding bells."

All swiftly as out rings your warning tongue
His sweetheart gets ready the tea for Ah Lung,
And ebony Chloe of Fifth Avenue—South—
In welcoming smiles spreads her generous mouth.
Far different to them is the treat it foretells—
Your meaning, prosaic, just "dinner bells."

Bianca in tune shakes her gay tambourine,
And lightly to church trips demure Angeline,
Bestowing no look to the left nor the right,
Though noting full well the admirer in sight.
But soon a sweet smile all his doubting dispels,
And gayly your chiming betokens "sleigh bells."

The children run out longed-for gifts to receive,
And all the world is full of joy, I believe,
For northward and southward, to east and to west,
The bells peal out plainly what each one likes best.
Then ring ye, and swing ye, ye gay Christmas bells,
Your chiming the fairest of messages tells.

MINCE PIE.

A QUEEN'S DISH, FOR OLD AND YOUNG, WEAK AND STRONG.

Mince pie and Christmas are inseparable. Both are rich contributions to enjoyment. However high the tide of reverence for menus may rise we are, sooner or later, sure to come down from our devotional eyrie, to this queen of pie. Now there are mince pies that savor of anything but enjoyment after eating them. When one starts out to perform an artistic piece of work, it is necessary to know how the achievement is to be accomplished. Like building a house, there are the preliminary arrangements to the proper construction of this festive dish. No wonder a mince pie is associated with royal song and musical birds. True, some vandal minds have tried to link mince pies with ghosts, hobgoblins, and night horses! but a genuine, delicious, and healthy pie is formed "on this wise." The butcher is the first actor in this culinary scene; from his stall must be selected a firm, good piece of juicy lean beef off the round. "Oh!" I hear one say, "that is too expensive." Cheapest in the end, as all good articles are; no gristle, surplus fat, and suspicious portions to be denounced, a nice piece off the round is most reliable. This should be boiled until tender. It should always be a part of a cook's religion to skim a boiling mess often. When done, chop very fine, reserving a little of the rich liquid in which it was prepared for the chopping-knife, to mix in when fine enough. A two-bladed chopper is best; I have seen, and used a six-bladed one, but they are a nuisance, as the meat will lodge among the steel workers. Use the greening apples, by all means, also chopped fine, but not as fine as the meat. One quart of apples to two pounds of meat; citron, also chopped, not sliced; raisins (box) seeded and chopped—do not put them in whole; cinnamon moderately, cloves scant, nutmeg plentiful, and molasses and sugar; no currants—these are the little imps of mischief that make the modern pie coarse, and common. They have no right in our little crown jewel of kitchen art. Currants fulfil their mission on the bush, in the garden; from their native shrub they should be transferred to the mouth, table, or preserve-kettle, perchance, but never dried. Cider is an old standard for mince pie, as well as brandy; the former is best. Should both come under a ban, then a good substitute arises in the form of lemon juice freely disguised in the stock,—no peel of orange or lemon. We are now building a healthy dish. The crust—ah! "now comes the tug of war;" in that little word hides the dyspeptic's nightmare, and the dear little one's self-denial is when enforced in a household where the Christmas pie is temptingly displayed. It is as harmless as your prettily lighted tree of bon-bons, if the crust is properly made.

Prepared flour should always be used for a mince crust. It may be bought, or arranged from the barrel by incorporating, when dry, baking-powder freely with the plain article; pure, white, clean lard (sometimes lard has arsenic in it which gives it a superficial whiteness). See to it that your lard is not adulterated. Mix thoroughly with the flour; let the process be performed with both hands. A skilled pastry cook must know how to use her hands to advantage. Let the crust mixture be moistened with cool water, and a little richer than you make for short-cake. If tough, the pie is a failure. Always bake a trial pie as a test of its richness. Both upper and under crusts should be thick—never make either thin. Line the plate, which must not be deeper than a dinner plate and about the size of a large one. See that the edges are well snugged and free from air crevices. The pie mixture, after being stirred well, should be very moist. Taste it. Stir again, then taste again, until you are sure that the ingredients are evenly distributed. Submit it finally to some critic that has not before tasted. When you conclude that nothing is lacking, then spoon into the plate, pressing the mince near the edges, but not too near. One inch deep makes a well filled pie. Now roll out the upper crust, flour, and fold it, and with a jigger-iron cut the fold prettily, then strike off a spray on the balance with a clash of cuttings to resemble leaves. Unfold the dough and lay carefully over the fire, press the edges together, and use the jigger again on them as fancy dictates. Have the oven ready, and evenly heated. Let the pastry brown nicely, baking firsh[illegible] bottom. They should be well baked. [illegible] principle of nine days old applies to this delicious dish, for they improve with age.