A PLUM PUDDING PARTY

BY MARGARET M. SCOTT.

A Plum Pudding Party! Don't you want to start it this minute? But since guests do add to a party it might be a good thing to invite some. This little verse on brown wrapping paper could be used for the invitation:

The Plum Pudding Fairy will be in town,
Thursday, four hours past sundown.
If you would see this jolly sprite
Don't forget to come that night.
Name—— Date—— Place——

Then fold the paper and tie it up in a four-inch square of white cotton to represent a pudding bag.

Bare branches can soon be changed into sugar plum trees. Just hang sticks of candy, lollypops, cookies, strings of raisins, and pieces of cinnamon bark on them and watch the transformation. Narrow strips of bright-colored paper could take the place of leaves, and you might pin some cut-out birds on the curtains and draperies and hang some from the chandelier.

If you prefer, you might invite the guests as early as six or seven and serve the refreshments as the evening meal, and then follow with the program. As a supper party you might serve a more substantial menu. But in either case serving at seven, preceding the program, or at ten, following it, the ceremony of the fairy and her pudding can be made especially delightful and entertaining.

The suggested decorations are not hard to obtain or to arrange, and should enable the hostess to give a different kind of Christmas party that will be quite as enjoyable as the time-honored kind with a Christmas tree and a Santa Claus.

MENU.

Cheese Sandwiches
Meat or Peanut-Butter Sandwiches
Pickles Olives
Plum Pudding
Coffee

If supper is served at seven you might add a salad or a hot vegetable like baked beans, escalloped corn or potatoes, or something even more elaborate. Here's the recipe for Scotch Plum Pudding (for 20):

One pound seeded raisins, 1 pound currants, 1 pound diced suet, 1 pound granulated sugar, 1½ loaves breadcrumbs, ¼ pint milk (enough to moisten and "bind"), 4 ounces grated orange peel, 2 ounces grated lemon peel, 1 pint sifted white flour (enough to "bind"), 2 ounces chopped figs, 3 eggs (well beaten), 1 teaspoon (heaping) ground cinnamon, 1 teaspoon (level) ground cloves, 1 tablespoon vanilla extract.

Mix ingredients well; mould into round shape. Having boiled ¾ yard of new muslin (unbleached) ten minutes, wring out, spread on table; sift flour 1-16 inch deep and 14 inches in diameter in centre of cloth; deposit mold; gather up edges of cloth tightly and evenly (allowing for pudding swelling a little) and tie with ⅜-inch-wide strip of muslin in a slipknot. Put in deep pot of boiling water, and boil for four hours briskly; keep covered with water all the time. An old plate in bottom of the pot will prevent pudding from sticking to bottom of pot.

RECIPE FOR SAUCE.

Two ounces butter, 2½ pints milk, 2 heaping tablespoons sifted white flour, 1 heaping tablespoon grated cocoa (or chocolate), 1 ounce grated crystallized ginger, 1 tablespoon vanilla extract, sugar (to suit taste).

Bring milk in saucepan almost to boil; add butter and slowly stir in thickening (which has been mixed with cocoa); add ginger and sugar. Bring just to boil a moment; remove and add vanilla.

(Note—To re-heat whole pudding, boil 1½ hours.)

CONTEST OF SPICES.

A good way to "break the ice" at this party would be to hold a "Contest of Spices" first. Appoint a judge to keep the score. He sits at a table on which are arranged six or more numbered envelopes each containing a different spice. The players are provided with paper and pencil, each paper having a column of numbers corresponding to those on the envelopes. The player writes his name on his paper, approaches the table, smells (but may not see) each envelope in rotation, and writes his guess on his paper. When all have one this, the judge collects the papers and awards a prize of an apple stuck full of cloves to the player having the keenest nose. No player is allowed more than three minutes to examine the envelopes.

PLUM PUDDING SPELLING BEE.

This list of words is suggested:

Pudding, sugar, candy, jellies, sauce, granulated, bark, spices, ingredients, nutmeg, crystallized, sifted, cloth, string, raisins, mold, walnut, milk, lemon, butter, pound, stir, level, grated, loaves, quart, extract, seeded, batter, plums, cinnamon, jumbles, cloves, sweeten, ginger, flour, diced, muslin, sift, currants, slip-knot, suet, orange, vanilla, eggs, shape, heaping, boiling, beaten, crumbs, smooth, flavoring, thickening, teaspoonful, dromedary dates, tablespoonful.

THE FLUTTERING RIBBON.

Players in this game are arranged in a line according to size, the largest on one end and the smallest on the other. Each player stands with his hands on the shoulders of the person in front of him. At a signal the game begins, the largest player tries to catch the smallest one and the others attempt to prevent it by twisting, coiling and turning about. The line must not be broken.

The antics caused by keeping the ends apart furnish no end of excitement and fun. When the smallest player is caught the game may be reversed, the largest player being pursued this time.

When the game is over, place a small table in the centre of the room and then bring in what appears to be a pudding. But instead of savory steam, red and green ribbons come from the top. Fastened to the ribbons are little packages, two of which, one red and one green, contain a few raisins, two others a cube of sugar. You might fill the rest with nutmegs, orange peel, figs, hard candies, currants, nuts, or little cookies, but there must be a red to match each green.

Give each girl a red ribbon and the green ones to the boys, and as the large pudding is untied the guests pull gently. The little packages are opened then, and the matching contents decide who are supper partners.

Serve the sandwiches, salads, and coffee, or whatever you decide upon, for the first course. And now is the time for the fairy. Your little sister will enjoy impersonating her. To herald her coming, "The Plum Pudding Fairy" is read aloud. The fairy is dressed in a light brown costume to which are sewed raisins, candy, and small cookies. She carries a wand with a small pudding bag on the end. As soon as the poem is finished the fairy comes in and bows to the company. Then she waves her wand over the table, and two of her attendants appear. One carries the pudding, the other the sauce. They place them, bow, and disappear. Then the fairy bows and goes out, and the guests find that fairyland puddings are as good as they'd dreamed they would be.

The Plum Pudding Fairy.

The plum pudding fairy's a beautiful queen
Who possesses the magic key
Of the wondrous land of cookies and cakes
Where sugar plums grow on a tree.

This wonderful land just out of our reach
Has trees that are very handy;
They all are covered with cinnamon bark
And twigs that are made of candy.

The toadstools are jumbles; the springs, root beer;
Flower cookies are found with ease,
While squirrels and birds are fat little cakes,
And jellies ooze out of the trees.

In the very midst of this wondrous grove,
On a stalk that's not very tall,
There grows the plum pudding, spicy and sweet,
The best and the grandest of all.

Christmas in Olden Time.

Sir Walter Scott was known far and wide as a poet long before he won fame as a novelist. The following lines are taken from "Marmion":—

Heap on more wood! the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer,
And well our Christian sires of old,
Loved when the year its course had rolled,
And brought blithe Christmas back again
With all its hospitable train.
Forth to the wood did merry-men go
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside
And Ceremony doffed his pride.
The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide.
The huge hall table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by
Plum porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor failed old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savoury goose.
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the merriest tale;
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

MY GIFTS.

My gifts are made with my fingers,
For my dollars are too few:
And so I'm going to stamping, sewing
For you and you and you.

My gifts are made with my fingers,
In the old-time women's art:
My gifts are made with my fingers,
And with my heart.
—Mary Carolyn Davies.

In addition to measurements and fingerprints of criminals, phonographic records of their voices can now be taken without their knowledge.

O little town of Bethlehem; How still we see thee lie!

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark street shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray:
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

Phillips Brooks.

There Is a Room.

The little King has come, has come!
Hast thou a guest room in thy home?
Send Him not forth with beasts to lie,
Seest thou? His star shines in the sky;
Welcome Emmanuel; ne'er depart
There is a room within my heart.

Watching their sheep on distant hill,
Angelic strains the shepherds thrill,
Joyful they haste to see the Child,
The promised Saviour, undefiled.
So would I hasten, glad to greet
And kneel O Christ-child, at Thy feet.

Alas! O World, turn not away
Thy Sacred Guest, this natal day,
Too oft in ignorance and sin
Have nations turned Him from the inn,
But from me, Saviour, ne'er depart,
Dwell in the room within my heart.
—Emma Watt Easton.

Getting Ready.

Mr. Bug—"My, I never saw little Johnny so industrious before."

Lady Bug—"Why, don't you know Christmas is coming?"

The fool wonders; the wise man asks.

GAMES FOR THE CHILDREN'S PARTY

Christmas Company is played thus: Stretch a sheet across a doorway and behind it place a barn lantern or electric light (do not use an oil lamp). Let a group of young folks dress in various grotesque disguises, and appear, one by one, behind the screen so that their shadows will be thrown upon it. The other guests then endeavor to recognize the "Christmas company" by their shadows. Noses can be built "up" or "out" by means of wax, in order to change the profiles; pillows will change the slender to stout; and it will be no easy problem to determine the identity of the various shadows.

Christmas Presents can be made a jolly game. The players sit in a circle and the leader asks a player "What did Santa Claus bring you?" The player may reply (for example) "a ukulele" and immediately pretend he is strumming one. In answer to the same question, the next player may mention "a vacuum cleaner" and begin to roll an imaginary cleaner. Whoever names a gift that can not be pantomimed is "out." The leader goes 'round the circle until all are pantomiming their presents in an absurd manner. The question is again asked the ukulele player, who may then answer "hair-brush" and try to brush his hair and play the ukulele at the same time. The questions continue around the circle and it will not be long until the game breaks up in a gale of laughter.

For the Christmas Candy Box, cut cardboard into oblongs the shape of candy boxes and write on each the following rhymes. Have pencils in readiness and award a box of candy to the person who first writes the correct answers.

1. 'Tis in the mouth, to this add a fall,
   And now you have candy for children so small.
2. Sometimes 'tis foolish praise ('tis true)
   And sometimes it's sticky candy, too.
3. A word for nonsense you'll oft exclaim
   And thus a favorite candy name.
4. Your Christmas-candy box may hold
   A meadow flower, bright as gold.
5. The first a dairy product
   'Tis always on the table,
   The next, a people o'er the sea;
   Now guess if you are able!
6. Where they make money, so shining and bright,
   And so as a candy it must be all right.
7. The second is a color, the first, a chilly season,
   The whole, a candy old folks like, of course "there is a reason!"
8. A French word meaning good,
   Suppose you say it twice,
   And you will have a candy
   That's always very nice!
9. To make this good candy, two words you must take:
   The first is a nut, the next "easy to break."
10. A slangy word for whip,
    A vowel, then a food,
    You'll have a candy that is black
    But also very good.

Answers: 1, Gumdrop; 2, taffy; 3, fudge; 4, buttercup; 5, butterscotch; 6, mint; 7, wintergreen; 8, bonbon; 9, peanut brittle; 10, licorice.

STEAMER LOOKS LIKE ARCTIC EXPLORER

Coated in ice from bow to stern, and from waterline to the tops of her rigging at the end of her last lake trip for the season, the Canada Steamships Line, 3,000 ton bulk freighter, "Mapleton," presents a frigid appearance as she lies docked at Toronto. The "Mapleton," which is commanded by Captain Dan Cornett, left Wallaceburg with a cargo of 2,000 tons of sugar for the Dominion Sugar Company, last Thursday, and between forcing a passage through the rapidly closing Welland Canal and battling with the waves on the lakes, took until shortly after midnight Monday to complete a run that is normally made in two-and-a-half days. The "Mapleton" is the last but one of the company's boats to lay up for the winter.

Just About.

"I want a shirt for little brother," said the child in the dry goods store.

"What size, my dear? How old is your brother?"

"I don't know 'zactly. He's not very old. He just takes two steps an' nen he falls down."

When It Runs.

"The directions say to turn the handle clockwise. What does that mean?"

"How absurd! Don't you know the way your clock runs?"

"Sure, it runs down."

THE GIFTS

BY JEANNIE PENDLETON HALL.

The little Jesus dropped the glistening things
(The place smelled sweet of frankincense and myrrh),
And Mary pressed her darling close to her.
It seemed so very strange!
Like any other baby's were the rings
Of soft damp hair upon his tiny head,
And yet—those Three, the stately camel-tread,
The Star that did not change!

She hid the Magi gifts half tenderly,
Half jealously, for Joseph in distress
Groaned of their splendor and their uselessness
And would have proffered them
Back to the givers, could such rudeness be.
But they were gone; the rested camels sped
Busily eastward now, and rumor said
Not by Jerusalem.

The warning came, "To Egypt!" and within
Her simple bundle Mary stowed the gifts
(They scented it like apple-blossom drifts
In May), but Joseph frowned.
"I fear it is a menace, half a sin,
To lade the beast," saith he, "with things so rare.
When shall our Sonling need that incense there?"
Saith she, "When He is crowned."
Where were the gifts those three sharp, crowded years
'Twixt wilderness and Calvary? Mayhap
His mother kept them; sometimes would unwrap
The covering and behold
The well-saved treasures through her lonesome tears:
The little censer, deftly wrought and filled,
Worthy a prince, delightsome to a child,
The myrrh, the yellow gold.

Where now? Were they caught heavenward, glowing, hung,
As was the Holy Grail that none might see
Except the knight of stainless purity?
No matter! Far away
The winds of centuries the shards have flung
Of larger trophies, but these centuries keep
The Magi-thought, and while the Caesars sleep
Our hearts give gifts to-day.

MUTT AND JEFF—By Bud Fisher.