

Christmas Fare

CHRISTMAS CAKES.

Farmers' Fruit Cake.—Chop fine half a pint of dried apples; cover with half a pint of cold water and let them soak over night. The next morning add a cupful of golden syrup; simmer gently for one hour. Stand aside to cool. Beat half a cupful of butter to a cream; add one cupful of granulated sugar. Dissolve a teaspoonful of soda in two tablespoonfuls of water and add it to half a cupful of buttermilk or sour milk; add this to the batter; add two teaspoonfuls of cinnamon, half a teaspoonful of cloves, and one egg well beaten. Sift two cupfuls of flour; add a little flour, a little of dried apple mixture, and a little more flour until you have the whole well mixed. The batter must be the thickness of ordinary cake batter. Pour this into a well greased cake pan, and bake in a moderate oven for one hour.

Poor Man's Fruit Cake.—A delicious cake, but must be made most carefully to bring about good results. It, like all fruit cakes, is the better for standing. Seed and chop fine one pound of layer raisins. Dissolve a quarter of a teaspoonful of soda in two tablespoonfuls of warm water; then stir it into half a cupful of New Orleans molasses; add to this half a pint of thick sour cream and a cupful of dark brown sugar. Sift three and a quarter cupfuls of pastry flour; add to it the mixture, and beat thoroughly; then add a tablespoonful of allspice and a tablespoonful each of cloves and cinnamon; add the raisins, floured. Turn into a square or round pan and bake in a moderate oven for one hour and a half.

Domino Cakes.—Dominoes are not difficult to make. Beat half a pound of butter to a cream, adding gradually two cupfuls of sugar; add the yolks of four eggs. Beat thoroughly; then fold in the well beaten whites and three cupfuls of pastry flour sifted with two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Pour into greased shallow pans to the depth of half an inch. Bake in a moderate oven for fifteen minutes. When done turn out on a cloth to cool, and when cold cut with a sharp knife into oblong pieces the shape and size of a domino. Cover the top and sides with white icing; when this has hardened dip a wooden skewer into melted chocolate and draw the lines and make the dots of the dominoes. Children always are delighted with these little cakes.

Sand Tarts.—Beat half a pound of butter to a cream and add half a pound of granulated sugar; then add the yolks of three eggs and the whites of two, beaten together; add a teaspoonful of vanilla and just a little grated nutmeg. Mix in sufficient flour to make a dough. Dust your baking board thickly with granulated sugar. Take out a piece of dough, roll with a thin sheet, cut with round cutters and bake in a moderate oven until a light brown. Dust the top of the sheet with sugar instead of flour, to prevent the roller from sticking. By adding half a pound of cleaned currants to the above recipe you will have Shrewsbury currant cakes.

CHRISTMAS CANDIES.

Confectionery is one of the prerequisites of childhood and is looked for at Christmas by people of all ages, and as choice French candies are beyond the capacity of many a purse, and cheap ones are often made unwholesome, if not positively dangerous, by adulteration, home-made candies have become popular, many delicious and attractive varieties being as easily made as any other toothsome dainties.

A preparation called fondant—made by removing boiled syrup from the fire just before it will harden is the foundation of nearly all French candies, and when once the art of making this is mastered, a large variety of candies are easily made.

Fondant.—To one pound of sugar add one-half pint cold water and one-fourth teaspoonful cream of tartar and boil rapidly for ten minutes without stirring. Dip the fingers into ice water, drop a little of the syrup into cold water, then roll it between the fingers until it forms a soft, creamy, adhesive ball. If not hard enough boil a little longer, and if too hard add a little water, boil up, and test again. Set aside in the kettle to become lukewarm, then stir the mass with a ladle until it is white and dry at the edge. It should then be taken out and kneaded, exactly as one would knead dough, until it is creamy and soft. By covering with a damp cloth and keeping in a cool place it will keep well for several days, and several times this amount may be made at one time. In making several pounds it is better to divide the mass before kneading, and each part may be flavored differently.

Chocolate Creams.—Dust the molding board with a little flour as possible and roll a piece of fondant into a cylindrical shape. Cut in into regular shaped pieces, roll between the palms of the hands until round, lay on paraffin paper, and let harden until the next day. Melt a cake of chocolate in a rather deep vessel that has been set in a pan of hot water, add a piece of paraffin half as large as a walnut, the same amount of butter, and one-fourth teaspoonful of vanilla. Roll the cream in this by using a steel fork or crochet



"Whew, here I am with presents for little boys and girls."

needle, and place again on paraffin paper.

Nut Rolls.—Take equal parts of whatever variety of nut meats you prefer and fondant. Mix well and form into a roll. Cover this with plain fondant, roll in granulated sugar, and let harden until next day, then cut crosswise.

PLUM PUDDING.

One pound of butter, one pound of suet, chopped and free from strings, one pound of sugar, two and a half pounds of flour, two pounds of raisins, seeded and chopped, two pounds of currants, stemmed and washed, one-quarter pound of citron, shredded, one dozen eggs, yolks and whites beaten separately, one pint of milk, one cup of brandy, one-half ounce each of cloves and mace, two grated nutmegs. Cream butter and sugar, add the yolks of the eggs, the milk, and brandy, and spice, after that the fruit, dredged with flour. Last of all pour in the whites of the eggs, alternately with the flour. Steam for five hours.

CHRISTMAS HINTS.

Raisins for Plum Pudding.—Remember that muscatel raisins will give the puddings a richer flavor and better color. You can buy them cheaply if loose and not in bunches.

When Choosing the Turkey.—Medium sized turkeys really are far more tender than those gigantic birds so proudly displayed by poulterers.

Christmas Pudding.—Allow the Christmas pudding to stand for at least five minutes before turning it out of the basin to serve; it lessens the chance of it sticking.

Currants.—When washing the currants for mince meat and Christmas pudding bear in mind that if left all damp they cause heaviness and if they are dried in a hurry before a quick fire their flavor is spoiled.

For the Boys.—When the housekeeping purse will allow it, an extra batch of perhaps plainer mince pie, etc., give great pleasure to the various errand

boys and messengers who may come to the house during Christmas.

To Frost Holly Leaves.—For dessert dishes pick some nice leaves from the stalks of holly and wipe dry, then place them on a dish near the fire to get quite dry, but not too near to shrivel; dip them in oiled butter, sprinkle over them some coarsely ground sugar, and dry them before the fire.

Pudding.—A good recipe for Christmas pudding: One pound of raisins, one pound of currants, one pound of raw sugar, half a pound of sultanas, one pound of finely chopped suet, one pound of flour, one pound of bread-crumbs; two ounces of candied peel, half ounce of bitter almonds, one ounce of sweet almonds, four eggs, one teaspoonful of allspice, one pint of milk, one gill of brandy or rum. All mixed well together and boiled for eight hours.

AT LAST! EXPLAINED.

Jack Sprat he wanted fat,
His wife she longed for lean,
For he was as thin as a rail, and she
Weighed two hundred and seventeen.

ONE WAS ENOUGH.

Ms. McSinger—"If I should die you would never get another wife who would look after you as I have done."
Mr. McSinger—"No, not if I could help it."

THE CHRISTMAS TABLE.

Do not overdress the Christmas table. Holly is always beautiful and appropriate, while white chrysanthemums seem the very best possible flower. A handsome centerpiece is a high dish, silver or glass, piled with several colors of grapes, or other fruit, with leaves if possible; nothing is prettier than rosy apples, with a few green leaves. The cloth at the bottom of the dish is wreathed with holly. This is about as simple as possible, but it is good. If flowers be desired, a white chrysanthemum at each cover will serve.



AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

Mr. Christmas Shopper suddenly remembers that he has not paid last year's coal bill.

FUN FOR CHRISTMAS GATHERINGS.

The following jolly game was recently played after this fashion: The guests were arranged in a circle around the room. One young man occupied a revolving chair in the centre of the circle, so that he could easily face any one in the room.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I am here for criticism, advice and condemnation. I am not sensitive, and it doesn't matter what I get, but the principal words of your answers must begin with my initials, J. C. F." Turning to the first one he said, "What sort of a chap am I?"

"Jolly, careful and frisky," was the prompt answer.

To her right-handed neighbor he said: "What sort of a wife ought I to have?"

"Jaunty, cunning and fast," was a rather disconcerting reply.

"What ought I to eat?" he asked the next person.

"Jam, custard and fish," she answered.

"What profession am I best fitted for?" was asked the next person.

"Janitor, carpenter or fisherman," was the reply.

"I don't agree with you," he exclaimed. Appealing to the next person he said: "What do you think I am best fitted for?"

"Judge, commercial lawyer or financier," was the more flattering answer.

And so the game went on. When a person failed to make an answer he was obliged to change places with the questioner, and, giving his own initials, ask questions about himself. No question is allowed on any other subject or about any one else. Only two minutes is allowed for thinking of an answer.

DUMB CRAMBO.

To play this game the guests are divided into companies of six, who take turns in leaving the room. When the first six go out those remaining select a word, then a word rhyming with that one is mentioned to the outside party, who then re-enters the room, one or more, or all at once, and proceed to act other rhyming words, until they find the right one.

For instance, the company who first left the room were told that they must act a word that rhymed with "dell." One of them immediately came in ringing a tea bell.

"No," said the audience, "it is not bell."

It will be observed that the audience is obliged to guess what word the company is acting, while the company must guess the word the audience wishes acted.

Sell, well, tell and Nell were acted to no purpose, but when "cell" was represented it was pronounced the right word.

RHYMING COURTS.

The players in this game choose a judge and a sheriff. The judge takes a seat and the sheriff immediately runs after the rest of the players till one is caught. The prisoner is taken before the judge and the sheriff makes a charge. The charge may be anything. For instance, the sheriff may say:

"I caught this person stealing some hay."

The prisoner must answer in such a way as to make a rhyme. Thus he may reply:

"The sheriff's brain must be astray."

The sheriff must respond at once with testimony, as, for instance:

"Why, I saw the prisoner do it." And the prisoner may answer:

"He wasn't there, and he knew it."

This continues till the prisoner fails to find an answer that rhymes, when he or she is thrust into a dungeon. If, however, the prisoner answers in rhyme at least six times, the judge thunders something like:

"Discharge the sheriff for not being right." And if any of the other players can respond immediately with a rhyme, as, for example, "Give me his job and I'll work day and night," that player gets the office, while the prisoner is released and promoted to be assistant judge.

Thus the game continues till all the players are either in prison or promoted to be assistant judges.

MAGIC CIRCLE.

Tell your audience that it is in your power to place any person present in the middle of the room and draw a circle round him, out of which, although his legs and arms are free, it will be impossible for him to escape without taking his coat off.

"I shall use absolutely no force to detain you," you must say, "and I shall not bind you in any way, but all the same you will not be able to get out of the ring, struggle as you will, without partially undressing."

Your audience will be considerably puzzled, and some one is sure to offer to be put in the magic ring. Place the person in the middle of the room, blindfold him, button up his coat, and then take a piece of white chalk and draw a line right around his waist, outside the coat. When the handkerchief has been taken off his eyes he will see that it is impossible for him to get out of the "ring" without taking off his coat, and the audience will laugh heartily at the joke.

BASTE THE BEAR.

To play the game of "baste the bear," one of the players is chosen bear. He sits on a stool with a rope about four yards long tied around his waist, the other end being held by the bear's master. The other players run around them, flicking at the bear with their handkerchiefs, the master trying to catch them

without letting go the end of the rope or pulling the bear over. Should he do so, he must give his place to the player last touched. Each player captured takes the bear's place.

DICK'S MODEST WISH.

I wish I had a rubber sock
And it was ten foot long,
And big around as sister's frock
And everlasting strong!

And then when dear old Santa came
He'd laugh and say, "Ho ho!
That's pretty big!" But just the same
He'd fill it up I know.

You know dad said last Christmas
time

That why there wasn't all
For me that I had wanted was
My sock was lots too small.

But if I had that whopping sock
I'd sit up nights to write
A list of things I'd like to have
Put in it, Christmas night.

I'd wish an auto-car for dad
With lots of gasoline,
And for mamma the very best
Piano ever seen.

And sister should have lots of dolls.
Packed round in all the cracks
And I would have a bicycle,
Just like my cousin Jack's.

Last year I wished a rocking-horse
But seven's too old for that—
I'd rather have a real live one;
Sis wants a long-furred cat.

If all the little boys and girls,
Yes, every single one,
Had such a dandy sock as that,
Say, wouldn't it be fun?

WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME.

By Mary Baker G. Eddy, Founder of Christian Science.

To me Christmas involves an open secret, understood by few—or by none—and unutterable except in Christian Science. Christ was born of the flesh. Christ is the truth and life born of God—born of Spirit and not of matter. Jesus, the Galilean prophet, was born of the Virgin Mary's spiritual thoughts of life and its manifestation.

God creates man perfect and eternal in His own image. Hence man is the image or likeness of perfection—an ideal which cannot fall from its inherent unity with divine Love, from its spotless purity and original perfection.

Observed by material sense, Christmas commemorates the birth of a human, material, mortal babe—a babe born in a manger amidst the flocks and herds of a Jewish village.

This homely origin of the babe Jesus falls far short of my sense of the eternal Christ. Truth, never born and never dying. I celebrate Christmas with my soul, my spiritual sense, and so commemorate the entrance into human understanding of the Christ conceived of Spirit, of God and not of a woman—as the birth of Truth, the dawn of divine Love breaking upon the gloom of matter and evil with the glory of infinite being.

Human doctrines or hypotheses or vague human philosophy, afford little divine effulgence, divine presence or power. Christmas to me is the reminder of God's great gift—His spiritual idea, man and the universe—a gift which so transcends mortal, material, sensual giving that the meritment, mad ambition, rivalry and ritual of our common Christmas seem a human mockery in mimicry of the real worship in commemoration of Christ's coming.

I love to observe Christmas in quietude, humility, benevolence, charity, letting good will toward man, eloquent silence, prayer and praise express my conception of Truth appearing.

The splendor of this nativity of Christ reveals infinite meanings and gives manifold blessings. Material gifts and pastimes tend to obliterate the spiritual idea in consciousness, leaving one alone and without His glory.

THE SIGN OF PLENTY.

Master Tommy followed in the footsteps of that patron saint of feeding, Jack Horner, of Christmas pie fame, but instead of retiring to a corner, Tommy made a little glutton of himself at the family table.

His uncle one day noticed Tommy gobbling up mince-pies, jam, and cake with alarming rapidity, and thought it time to interfere.

"Tommy," he said, "you are a very greedy little boy. If I had eaten like you do when I was your age, my mother would have spanked me. Do you ever feel as if you've had enough?"

"Oh, yes," replied Tommy, "often." "How do you know when you're satisfied?" asked his uncle, with considerable anxiety.

"I just keep on steadily eating till I've got a pain, and then I eat one more rich cake to make sure!"

GEOLOGICAL.

Miss Dora—Papa, Jack told me the other day that you wouldn't believe he had money enough to support me unless he showed it to you. Has he done it?

Prudent Papa—Yes, dear. He proved it by the testimony of the rocks.

Some men have such weak eyes they actually couldn't tell the truth if they saw it.