

## COOKING HINTS

In baking a cake, always use the greatest heat at first.

When breadcrumbs are added to goose stuffing room must be allowed for swelling.

Cold sweet sauce is considered a more suitable adjunct to a Christmas pudding than a hot concoction.

Mince pies should be baked from twenty to thirty minutes, and the tops brushed over with the white of an egg a short time before they are done.

Dried green Peas, which are very cheap, make a most excellent soup for the winter. They should be soaked overnight in cold water.

To make egg-water take a quarter of a pound of tartaric acid, three quarters of a pound of bicarbonate of soda and one pound of arrowroot. Dry and mix well, and then add two ounces of sequi-carbonate of ammonia and two drachms of powdered tumeric.

The secret in having a good roast turkey is to baste it often enough, and to cook it long enough. A turkey of seven or eight pounds should be roasted at least three hours, and a very large turkey not less than four hours; an extra hour is preferable to one minute less.

To make soda-water.—Dissolve one pound of crushed sugar and two ounces of super-carbonate of soda into each two gallons of water used. When properly dissolved, fill pint bottles with this water; have the corks at hand, drop half a drachm of citric acid in crystals into each pint bottle, cork at once, and tie down. Keep the bottles in a cool place, and be sure to handle them carefully.

Goose with chestnuts.—Roast forty or fifty chestnuts, skin half of them; add them to half a pound of sausage-meat, a morsel of garlic, sage, salt and pepper to taste, a grate or two

of nutmeg, and the liver of the goose chopped finely. Mix well, and see that the chestnuts are well mashed. Skin the rest of the nuts, and put them in whole.—Roast the goose, and serve with gravy and a purée of chestnuts.

Mince-meat is plain and wholesome when made with a pound each of currants and raisins, a pound and a half of brown sugar, two pounds and a half of apples, half a pound of orange marmalade, the same of chopped suet, a pound of candied peel, a quarter of an ounce of good spice, the rind and juice of a lemon, and half a pint of raisin wine. After mixing and standing for a day or two, add more sugar, should it be required.

Cornflour Lemon Jelly.—To make four lemons, six ounces of sugar, three-quarters of a pint of water, and some cornflour are required. The rind of the fruit may be rasped or grated on the sugar. Add the strained juice of the lemons to the water, and boil in an enamelled saucepan. Then add the cornflour, mixed with cold water to a paste, and boil for a minute or two before pouring into a mould. An ounce and a half of cornflour to a pint of liquid is sufficient at this season. Use a shallow mould.

A wholesome Christmas plum-pudding can be made at small cost with a pound of smoothly mashed potatoes, half a pound of boiled and mashed carrots, a pound of flour (or half flour and half breadcrumbs for a lighter pudding), a pound each of currants and stewed raisins, half a pound of suet, three-quarters of a pound of sugar, a pinch of salt and good nutmeg, a good pinch of cloves, two teaspoonfuls of treacle, two ounces of candied peel, a large grated apple, and two eggs. Cost, about two shillings. Time for one pudding, about eight hours.

## SOME CHRISTMAS DISHES

To Salt Almonds.—First blanch the almonds and spread on a nice clean baking tin, add a small piece of butter; directly it is dissolved shake the almonds about a little. Bake till the almonds are a nice golden brown color then dredge with dried salt, and turn out to cool.

To Glaze a Christmas Ham.—First brush over the ham with beaten yolk of egg, then cover this very thickly with powdered breadcrumbs, pressed on firmly. Lastly, brush over the whole with thick cream, and set in a quick oven. This glaze should be brown, and will be like a delicious crust.

Christmas Cake.—Take an equal weight each of blanched sweet almonds, caster sugar, flour, butter, sultanas, and eggs. Pound the almonds to a paste in a marble mortar and mix all the ingredients together in the usual way. This cake should be baked rather slowly, and longer than an ordinary cake.

"Maid of Honor" Cheesecakes.—Boil gently together for a quarter of an hour half a pint of milk, two tablespoonfuls of breadcrumbs, two ounces of butter, a little thin lemon-juice, some loaf sugar, three well-beaten eggs, and stir till the mixture becomes thick. Then pass it through a sieve, add two more beaten eggs, and sufficient flavoring to be tasty. Line some patty-pans with puff-paste, half fill with the mixture, and bake.

Belgian Christmas Pudding.—Take half a pound of prunes, half a pound of currants, half a pound of flour, three ounces of suet, two ounces of mixed peel, half a teaspoonful of carbonate of soda, half a teaspoonful of spice, a pinch of salt, one egg, and a little milk. Stone the prunes after scalding and drying. Mix all the dry ingredients. Dissolve the soda in the warm milk. Beat the egg and add to mixture; beat all till quite blended; and pour into a well-greased mould, filling it only two-thirds up. Boil for five hours steadily.

Mince-meat.—Half a pound of finely chopped suet, half a pound of raisins (weighed after being stoned and chopped), half a pound of currants, one pound of chopped apples, three-quarters of a pound of mixed candied fruit finely chopped, three-quarters of a pound of brown sugar, spice to taste. Mix all the ingredients thoroughly together, place them in a jar, and then add two wineglassfuls of brandy. If the mince-meat is to be kept long, more brandy must be added.

Beef Sausages.—These are best when made of beefsteak. Take away all skin, and chop the meat finely, weigh, and place in an earthenware pan with these ingredients: To every pound of meat add a quarter of a pound of beef suet, a quarter of a pint of stock or water, two ounces of breadcrumbs, half an ounce of salt, half a teaspoonful of dried and sifted parsley, the same quantity of dried thyme, and a teaspoonful of black pepper. Work these ingredients thoroughly together with a wooden spoon. Clean some skins nicely, rub them well over with lemon juice, and put to soak in water. Take the skins out of the water one at a time, dry them, and fill with the sausage meat. Tie in lengths of about three inches. If these sausages are well made and cooked, they will, when cut, give plenty of gravy.

Plum Pudding.—One pound of beef

joint. Thread the needle again and run it through the legs and body at the thigh bone and back at the ends of the drum sticks. Draw the drum stick bones close together, covering the opening made by drawing the fowl, and tie the ends. Have both knots on the same side of the fowl, and when roasted cut on opposite side and draw out.

To roast, dredge the fowl with salt, pepper and flour, and place in a pan with 1 pint of water. Baste every 15 minutes. Allow 15 minutes to the pound to roast. Ten minutes before it is done, take out and wipe over with butter, and dredge once more in flour. Replace in oven until it is a golden brown and crisp.

## HOME-MADE CANDY FOR CHRISTMAS

Christmas day would not be complete without its boxful of sweets, and there are none more toothsome than the wholesome home-made varieties which are so easily prepared. They are safe for the children, and grown-ups like them as well. A box of these candies, packed in some dainty way, always makes an acceptable gift and sometimes proves a solution of the "What-shall-I-give?" problem which is always with us.

Cream Grapes.—3 lbs. confectioners' sugar, 1 pt. water. Pinch cream of tartar. Grapes. First make your fondant, putting the sugar into a saucepan, adding the cold water, and stirring over the fire until the sugar is dissolved. Add the cream of tartar and allow the mixture to boil until it forms a soft ball when tried in cold water; then pour into a basin which has been rinsed with cold water. When it is cool enough for you to put your finger in the middle of it; cream it and, when thick, knead with your hands until it is a solid, firm, creamy mass. Drop some of this fondant into a small saucepan, add a few drops of lukewarm water, and melt it carefully, stirring continuously. Dip each grape into the melted fondant, drop on wax-paper and set on a tray or tin until it hardens.

Kumquat Candies.—Kumquats, two cupfuls confectioners' sugar, pinch cream of tartar, ½ cupful water, yellow coloring, chopped nut-meats. Cut a small slice from the top of the kumquats, scoop out all the insides and place the kumquats in small paper cases. Put the sugar into a saucepan, add the strained kumquat-juice, cream of tartar and water. Stir till the sugar is dissolved; then boil till coloring, pour onto a slab and knead till smooth. Return to the pan and stir till melted, then pour into the prepared cases. Sprinkle with the nut-meats which have been finely chopped.

Honeyed Pop-Corn.—Pop-corn, salt, ½ cupful water, 1½ cupful Honey, 1½ cupful sugar. This sweetmeat will be especially appreciated by the children. Pop the desired amount of corn and

salt it lightly; stir well and place aside in a moderate oven. Now pour the water over the sugar and allow it to dissolve slowly over the fire. When it has boiled four minutes add a cupful of the honey, stirring all the time, and as soon as the mass starts to boil pour in the rest. Keep stirring constantly to prevent burning or sticking to the sides of the saucepan. Boil to the soft-ball stage and pour over the pop-corn. Mix and cool.

Baked Candies.—1½ cupful brown sugar, 1 egg, ¼ teaspoonful boiling water, 2 egg whites, 1 teaspoonful vanilla, 1 cupful pecans or English Walnuts. Place the sugar and water together in a saucepan. Stir until the sugar is dissolved; then cook without stirring until a little dropped in cold water forms a soft ball. Have the egg whites stiffly beaten, pour the boiling hot syrup over them, and beat until the mass is soft and creamy. Add the vanilla and the nuts and continue to beat until the candy stiffens. When nearly set drop by spoonfuls on wax-paper and leave until hardened.

Baked Candies.—1½ Cupful brown sugar, 1 egg, ¼ teaspoonful boiling water, 2 cupfuls chopped hickory-nuts, Orange and lemon flavoring, pinch of salt. Beat the egg to a stiff froth. Add the sugar, also the baking soda, and continue to beat until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Flavor to taste and add the nuts, finely chopped, stirring so that they are well blended with the other ingredients. This quantity of nuts should be enough to form the mixture into a stiff paste. Spread on greased papers and lay these on baking pans. Bake in a moderate oven for twenty minutes, and when cold cut into squares. Fold each of these squares in wax-paper so that they will not run together.

Mexican Candy.—2 Cupfuls brown sugar, 1 tablespoonful butter, pinch of salt, 1 teaspoonful vanilla extract, ½ cupful cream, 2 cupfuls Pecan nuts. Place the sugar, butter, salt, and cream in a saucepan and cook, stirring constantly until the mixture boils. Reduce the heat and continue the cooking until a little dropped in cold water forms a soft ball when rubbed between the thumb and finger. Cool, then beat until the candy thickens. Add the vanilla and the nuts, and immediately form into small heaps, dropping these from the tip of a spoon upon wax-paper. This candy needs a good deal of care in the making, as it must not be cooked until too hard, nor beaten after it has begun to set.

Didn't Originate in Germany.

The Christmas tree is usually supposed to have originated in Germany, but this is not the case. The custom descends from Ancient Egypt, and is traced back to a period long before the Christian era. It is traceable to the fact that the palm-tree, puts forth a branch every month; and at the end of the year the Egyptians were accustomed to set up in their houses a spray of this tree with twelve shoots on it as a symbol of the completed year.

## DAINTY SWEETMEATS

A Pretty Christmas-Cake.—A Christmas cake will be doubly attractive to the children if "Merry Xmas" is traced with icing about the sides or top. The loaf cake should first be covered with a thick coating of icing, preferably colored red and flavored with strawberry or red raspberry.

A white icing for the decoration and lettering, can have a delicate flavor of vanilla. The scrolls, leaves and lettering can be formed with the use of a cornucopia made of very stiff paper, sewed together and the point clipped to any sized opening desired. One will require a small hole for the lettering, while a larger one will be better for the filling. The icing is placed in the cornucopia, and by gently pressing from the side near the top as one guides the cornucopia over the cakes the icing will ooze through the small end. The inexperienced hand should first trace the letters with a knitting needle across the firm coat of icing.

Icings and Flavorings.—There is nothing that equals the boiled icing, and by boiling the sugar and water without stirring until it spins threads when run off a spoon or fork, then turning this syrup on the whites of the eggs, which have been whipped dry, then beaten until cold, one will have a delicious covering. A half teaspoonful of cream of tartar put into the sugar and water prevents sugaring. Stewed cranberry juice, red currant, raspberry jellies or beet juice will produce any shade of red or pink, and should be put into the sugar and water before it begins to boil. Five cents' worth of red and green vegetable coloring purchased at a reliable drug store will give one enough material for a family for six months. When purchasing say that it is wanted for food coloring, and this will assure getting a vegetable and not a mineral preparation.

An Uncooked Icing.—An uncooked icing that will keep moist for several days is made by using confectioners' sugar, which is also known in stores as "four X," adding enough sweet cream until it is moist enough to spread without running. Add the flavoring and roll out all lumps in the sugar before wetting. For this icing the coloring should be put in alternating with the cream. If it becomes too thin add more sugar.

A word about flavorings: Many a housekeeper pays twenty-five or thirty-five cents for a three-ounce bot-

tle of extract when she can purchase at the drug store vanilla optimum for \$1.25 a pint, and in some localities for less. This is the first grade of vanilla, and a pint will last an ordinary family a year.

All spoon measurements in the following recipes mean level, unless otherwise stated; the cups used are the one-half pint measuring ones, and the molasses is the dark New Orleans.

Fruit Loaf.—Remove the rind from one pound solid fat, salted pork; cut into slices, chop very fine, or put through the mincing machine; then pour over it one half pint absolutely boiling water. Remove seeds from one pound raisins, take one pound currants, cut one pound citron into thin narrow strips. Put together two

tablespoonfuls pulverized cinnamon, one tablespoonful each pulverized cloves, mace, nutmeg; add one pint molasses, then the pork and water; now beat in enough flour to make a batter that can be easily dropped from the spoon; sift two teaspoonfuls bicarbonate (baking) soda in with part of the flour, dredging the fruit with that part of the flour which has no soda in, stirring in the flour fruit the very last thing to prevent its dropping to the bottom of the batter. Grease paper and line the tins two-thirds full and bake in a slow oven for two hours or until the centers are firm. It is always safe to test the batter in a little patty-pan, so if too thick or too thin it can be easily remedied. The exact quantity of flour cannot always be given, as some kinds thicken more and others less. Pastry flour should always be used whenever it can be secured, as it makes a more tender cake.

Another Recipe.—This may appeal to those who do not care for the pork as shortening: Cream one-half cupful butter; then add one-half cupful brown sugar and cream again; add one-half cupful each of molasses and sweet milk; beat one egg and add. Sift together one and three-fourths cupful flour, one-half teaspoonful soda, one teaspoonful cinnamon, one-half teaspoonful each of cloves, grated nutmeg, allspice and mace. Dredge one-half pound raisins and one-fourth pound currants and add the last thing, as in above recipe. This makes one large cake. Steam three hours, then quickly transfer to a well-heated oven for one hour, or omit the steaming and bake in slow oven for three hours.

# Guests At Noel Edmund Clarence Stedman



Noel, Noel!  
This sounds each Christmas bell  
Across the winter snow  
But what are the little footprints all  
That mark the path from the churchyard wall?  
They are those of the children, wake tonight  
From sleep by the Christmas bells and light:  
Ring, sweetly, chimes! Soft, soft, my rhymes!  
Their beds are under the snow.



Noel, Noel!  
Cease, cease, each Christmas bell!  
Under the holly bough,  
Where the happy children throng and shout,  
What shadow seems to flit about?  
Is it the mother, then, who died  
Ere the greens were set last Christmas-tide?  
Hush! falling, chimes! Cease, cease, my rhymes!  
The guests are gathered now.

- Fasting at Christmas.  
When Cromwell ruled England he issued an edict against all festivities at Christmas. The festival was altogether abolished, and the displaying of holly and mistletoe and other emblems of the happy time was held to be seditious.
- Christmas Gift Quotations.  
Wrap Christmas gifts in white tissue paper, tie with red-ribbon. Fasten in the bow a small sprig of holly. Enclose with gift card with Christ wish.
- "Sunbeams bless thy Christmas day,  
Gladness dwell with thee for aye."
  - "We hope your Christmas will be merry;  
We hope you will be happy, very."
  - "The world is happy, the world is wide,  
May joy be yours this Christmas-tide."
  - "Christmas comes but once a year;  
Christmas always brings good cheer."
  - "Christmas greetings with good cheer,  
And may you have a glad New Year."
  - "Holly branch and mistletoe,  
Happy days where'er you go."
  - "Sing a song of Christmas,  
Wish you happy times,  
Four and twenty joybells  
Ring your merry chimes."
  - "To every one and all of yours,  
We wish a merry day."
  - "For you we wish the Christmas pleasures  
Through all the year may stay."
  - "In your heart be Christmas gladness,  
Far from you be care and sadness."
  - "Sing hie, sing hey, sing hol  
sing holly!  
We wish your Christmas will be jolly."