

# ICING AND DECORATING CAKES

BY MARION WASHBURN



WITH a little care, and a little practice, cakes may be iced and decorated at home as well as at the confectioner's. To do the work successfully, a few general rules must be observed, the eggs to be used must be fresh, and the sugar of good quality, very fine, and free from lumps. It is a good plan to sift the sugar through a fine sieve before using, and to place the eggs upon ice for an hour or two before you are ready to commence your work. If ornaments are to be used upon the cake, they must be put in place while the icing is moist. Very few utensils are necessary. Bakers use a rubber bag, with graduated nozzle, for flowering and dot patterns, but any one may make a substitute of stiff, white cardboard. Fold a number of square pieces into funnels, fasten with pins, and cut the small end off perfectly true and round. Some may be small, and others large; each should hold two tablespoonfuls of icing.

A thin, broad knife, a bowl of cold water, sugar, gelatine, cocoanut, chocolate, eggs and flavoring will be required, and some fruit coloring is also of use. The time was when the only icing known was that of the whites of eggs beaten stiff upon a platter and thickened with pulverized sugar; and perhaps the old way has not been improved upon as regards looks, but there are cheaper and better tasting icings, warranted not to crack or become sticky.

## BOILED ICING

TAKE one cup of white sugar, two tablespoonfuls of water. Boil until it strings, remove from the fire, and add the white of one egg beaten stiff. Stir all well together, flavor, and cover the cakes when it becomes cool.

## CONFECTIONER'S ICING

PLACE the whites of three eggs in a bowl, add an equal quantity of cold water, and stir in XXX confectioner's sugar until of the right consistency. Spread over the cakes, and when the first coat is dry fill one of the paper cones, and hold above the cake, with a finger over the small hole to regulate the stream. The icing must be so stiff that it can only be forced through by a gentle pressure above.

Allow it to flow in scallops, dots, or plain lines, as may suit the fancy. A very little practice will enable one to make beautiful patterns. A scroll border may be followed from a stamping pattern if you can trust the eye to follow the lines with any degree of accuracy. A cake is very pretty checked both ways by close lines, and a raisin or tiny drop of crimson jelly may be placed in every small square.

## GELATINE ICING

ONE spoonful of gelatine, two spoonfuls of water; when clear, add one spoonful of hot water and one cup of pulverized sugar. Flavor, and beat well. When nearly cool, spread thickly over the cake.

## PLAIN ICING

A PLAIN icing may be made in the same way, using one cup of sugar and two large spoonfuls of water. This is very good when eggs are dear. A caramel cake is very fine put together with the caramel icing, but the layers must all be baked, and everything ready to place together quickly. The icing may be placed over hot water, which will serve to keep it soft.

## GLASS ICING

TAKE one cup of light-brown sugar and two spoonfuls of water, a very small spoonful of butter and a few drops of lemon extract. Boil eight minutes, and pour over the cake while hot, spreading it evenly.

## CHOCOLATE ICING

TWO cups of sugar and just water enough to moisten. Boil until clear; add two cakes of grated chocolate, and one egg beaten stiff; flavor with vanilla, and beat until cold. After covering a cake with chocolate icing, have ready a cup of English walnuts, shelled, and arrange them over the top in circles. Daisies may be made of raisins, by placing one with seven around it at intervals over the cake. Raisins may be iced, then dried in the oven, and placed upon the chocolate cake, making a contrast, if desired.

## COLORED ICINGS

PINK and white, or "rosebud" cake, may be made by icing any white cake with boiled icing, to which a few drops of pink fruit coloring has been added. If this cannot be obtained, take a pinch of cochineal, add a few drops of boiling water, and when cool, strain, and stir a few drops into the icing. It makes a beautiful pink, and, although objectionable to some, I have used it with no bad effect. After icing with the pink, decorate in waves, dots, or circles, with white. Names or dates may be written in this way, and are very beautiful upon birthday cakes. If fruit coloring can be obtained, very handsome roses, with green leaves, may be designed by a skillful worker.

## SOME OTHER DECORATIONS

GRATED cocoanut may be sprinkled over a pink or yellow cake. Pretty decorations for a white cake are hearts and diamonds cut from firm currant jelly. The decorations for a wedding cake should be, of course, all white. A white cake may be checked with pink chocolate, or yellow lines. One thing to remember in this connection is that no amount of decoration will atone for a poorly made, or a poorly baked, cake.