

capital or without it; our turning-lathe would be of service here, and it is quite natural to see plants climbing up pillars; what, indeed, is more effective than that glorious combination of nature and art as seen in our host of ruined abbeys and churches, where the ivy does its very best to make up by its grace for the mutilation of architecture that we now strive in vain to imitate? Or, take another illustration of trellis-work that shall this time be *wholly* natural.

A stroll through a neighbouring forest or wood will quickly bring us upon some heaven-planted and then heaven-struck oak. It has dried to tinder, and there is a very beauty about its parched and twisted branches that makes us pause at once, but the fresh green of the ivy that has perhaps already covered the half of our dead tree makes it so beautiful in death that we love to sketch it.

A well-selected little branch of a tree, then, to serve as a sort of dead tree in miniature, plunged in a good-sized flower-pot, is for some climbers exceedingly effective; even our convulvulus and sweet-peas would look very well on this. We must, however, bear in mind that the trellis adapted for one class of climber would not be at all suitable for another. That, for example, fit for a *tropæolum* would not do for a *clematis* or a Japanese honeysuckle.

Returning once again to the romance of our ivy-clad buildings: there is one feature about ivy which is disastrous rather than romantic, and which must be guarded against. Give it time enough, and it will un-roof your house. In any very old house, you will find it lifting the tiles, and through any small aperture sending a bright green shoot through the ceiling into the room. The writer of this sheet well remembers reluctantly having to destroy a noble ivy, and having entirely also to *re-roof* a whole building it had overrun.

At a time of year more suitable for it than the present we shall hope at intervals to notice more in detail the properties of some of the best of our climbers, and the mode of their cultivation.

Now for a little work in our garden. Some people complain that the collection and storing of dead and dry leaves occasionally causes trouble afterwards, when the wind on a gusty day scatters them all over the garden again—away from the corner, perhaps, in which they have been housed. There is a remedy for the difficulty: fill two or three cold frames with them, and then among the leaves themselves plunge a few hardy flowers that you want to preserve, but for which you have, perhaps, hardly got room enough in your limited greenhouse. You will keep out the frost from your plants, keep your leaves together, and gradually be accumulating matter that in a little time will make excellent manure. A very good month is this dead one of the year for carrying out any drainage in our garden. This is a very important subject, and quite as important to the well-being of our whole garden as good drainage is to our own health, yet we often pass it by because of the trouble, the mess, and confusion, and perhaps the expense; but the penalty for neglect is that nothing can flourish in an undrained garden. Even a lawn that for a portion of the year is a species of shaking bog will soon lose its best qualities, and all the good velvet turf will give place to moss and coarse grass, which mars all the effect.

And, in our greenhouse, perhaps the principal evil against which we may have to contend is not frost—which we can readily keep out—but damp. Frost has been called by some gardeners, evil No. 2, and, strange as it may sound, No. 3 evil is *heat*. To get rid of damp, have a fire, though the weather be mild, and at the same time pull down your lights a little way, and have the door open to create a good current of air, so as to allow the damp to evaporate. And undue heat is generally occasioned by having too fierce a fire during a severe frost; this is positively dangerous to your whole stock, as perhaps in the early morning hours the fire is almost out, and the reaction from a high temperature to that below 32 degrees is fatal. Gardening requires prudence and discretion all the year round.

THE PRINCIPLES OF PASTRY-MAKING.

BY A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER OF COOKERY.

MANY people are reluctantly compelled to own that they have never in their lives made pastry which they were not ashamed to present at table, and, as a rule, they are unable to account for their failures, the causes of which might usually be briefly summed up thus:—

1. An insufficiently heated oven.
2. Excessive moisture in the mixing.
3. Heavy or superfluous handling, or sometimes the two combined.
4. Hard rolling; and—

5. Carelessness in the selection of the ingredients, which are too often of an inferior quality.

A humorist has said that "railway grease is all very well in its place," but it does not improve pies and puddings; and we feel that we cannot do better than begin with a few general hints that would-be pastry-makers will do well to bear in mind, whatever the kind or degree of richness of the pastry desired.

1. Have everything perfectly clean, and as cool as possible, and commence operations as far from the fire as convenient; in hot weather the cellar is the most suitable place.

2. Have everything in readiness before commencing, not forgetting the oven, which must be well heated.

3. Take care that the flour is perfectly dry and free from lumps; to insure this, pass it through a sieve just before using it, and when baking-powder is added, sieve that also.

4. See that the fat, whether butter, lard, or clarified dripping, is quite free from taint of any kind, or the least suspicion of mouldiness or rancidity.

5. If it be inconvenient to bake the pastry as soon as made, it must be kept in a cool place.

6. In rolling, the less flour used the better. Some cooks work in so much that it detracts considerably from the richness of the pastry.

7. After baking, leave the pastry (if not required for table at once) in the place where it was baked; if taken while hot into a cellar or larder, the sudden rush of cold air will tend to make it heavy.

These hints might be multiplied to an almost unlimited extent, but for the present they will suffice; experience will teach much, and a few facts thoroughly grasped at the outset are of far greater value to beginners than a number only half mastered.

A special note as to the baking:—Much might be said if space allowed, but one thing is certain: many a batch of pastry has been ruined in the oven, and it seems very difficult sometimes to hit the happy medium between “cinders and rawness.” A cold oven will spoil any pastry, as the fat will run out, hence it is impoverished, and the starch grains in the flour will not cook properly; if the crust is “flaky,” instead of a delicious crispness there will be toughness, and if “short crust,” instead of being crumbly and almost melting in the mouth, it will prove leathery and most indigestible.

The less frequently the oven-door is opened the better; those with a small glass pane inserted are very useful; and the door should be closed very gently; if banged, as it too often is, the pastry cannot fail to be soddened, for this reason:—hot air, that in the oven, is light, hence the rising of the crust; cold air is heavier than hot, hence the sinking. Supposing, though, a good-sized pie, with a tolerably thick crust, has to be baked: it must first be put in the hottest part to make it rise, and prevent the loss of fat previously referred to, then transferred to the cooler part to finish the baking; smaller articles may generally be baked at the same temperature throughout.

With reference to the various kinds of pastry, it is certain that to explain thoroughly the mode of making *Puff Pastry* alone would occupy several pages; indeed, if half a dozen good cooks were making it together, each would carry out many individual ideas in the manipulation of the ingredients, while the ways of folding are multitudinous. There are, however, two golden rules:—

1. Always keep the edges even; and—

2. Take care that the fat does not work through during the rolling, and stick to the board.

Good results will be obtained if the following directions are carried out:—Take a pound of flour, a

pound of butter (or half lard will do, in which case it must be blended with the butter before commencing), the yolk of one egg, a table-spoonful of lemon-juice, a pinch of salt, and some cold water; the exact quantity of this last requisite cannot be stated, as the weather, the consistency of the butter, and the quality of the flour, all prevent this, for, as experienced people know, the better the flour the more moisture it will absorb. Before commencing, read over the general hints, then put into a bowl, or on the board, the flour and salt, and rub two ounces of the butter into it, then make a hollow in the centre, into which must be put the beaten yolk, lemon-juice, and a little water, and the whole formed with the tips of the fingers into a paste as stiff as the butter was at commencing: that is, the paste and the butter should be as nearly as possible of the same consistence. It should then be worked into a smooth ball, and rolled out into a square sheet of equal thickness all over. The butter should be freed from all superfluous moisture by squeezing it in a clean cloth, and if at all salt it will need washing in several waters first; then spread it all over the sheet, and fold the edges together in the centre; again fold, making four layers one on the other; turn it round, roll out, then fold in three. It must be left in a cool place for ten or fifteen minutes, then rolled, and again folded; repeat this until it has been folded and rolled seven times, when it is ready for use. If it cannot be left to cool between every roll, it *will* do with three or four coolings in all. We have given this mode as a comparatively simple one for beginners, and will give, as a substitute, a recipe for *Rough Puff Pastry*; it is made in less time, and is nearly equal to the foregoing, if very lightly handled.

The materials are:—A pound of flour, a pinch of salt, half a tea-spoonful of baking-powder, six ounces each of lard and butter blended, cold water, and a tea-spoonful of lemon-juice. All the dry ingredients are to be well mixed, and the lard and butter broken up into them in pieces the size of a walnut; then sufficient water added, together with the lemon-juice, to make a rather stiff crust, which should be rolled out straight and even into a long narrow sheet—as long as possible without breaking; it may then be folded up like a roly-poly pudding, and after turning round, rolling out, and folding again four times in all, it is ready for baking.

This is very suitable for meat-pies, patties, rolls, &c., and in a good oven will rise considerably. We may here remind our readers that the best glaze for savoury pies is a mixture of beaten egg (yolk and white) and milk. Yolk of egg alone is often used, but it is very liable to burn in the oven. We may just instance *Flaky Pastry* as a homely variety of Puff Pastry; it is made in the same way, but only half the quantity of fat is used, and a good pinch of baking-powder should be put into the flour.

Short Crust is unquestionably the most generally met with; besides having the merit of digestibility, it is also more readily prepared; indeed, after the ingredients are ready to hand, to cover a pie with short crust is the work of a few minutes only.

A short crust good enough for ordinary use may be made by putting a pound of flour and a tea-spoonful of baking-powder into a basin, and rubbing in, until fine as bread-crumbs, six ounces of lard or clarified dripping; if required for tarts, fruit pies, &c., a tea-spoonful of castor sugar may be put in. Sufficient cold water to make this into a stiff paste, and one roll out to size required, and it is finished; it needs no folding or cooling; and beginners must remember that if "self-raising flour" is used, no baking-powder is needed.

A very delicious *Short Crust* is thus made:—A pound of flour, which should be a mixture of Hungarian and superfine, or pastry flour alone; five ounces each of lard and butter, or all butter; a little sugar, the yolk of an egg, a few drops of lemon-juice, and sufficient cold water; mix as above directed; this should be dredged with castor sugar after baking, or, if preferred, it may be lightly sprinkled with cold water, or brushed with the white of an egg, and dredged with

sugar *before* baking, though it will eat harder if the latter mode be adopted; indeed, this kind of glazing is more suitable for puffs, &c., made with flaky or rough puff pastry.

A last word about *Suet Crust*, which is, in many instances, the most carelessly prepared of all, and this fact is the more regrettable when we consider how very suitable and valuable a diet it is for use in cold weather, and how digestible it *may* be made with very little more trouble than is taken in preparing the indigestible mess one sometimes sees.

For a nice "Family Crust" mix together fourteen ounces of flour, two ounces of bread-crumbs, a tea-spoonful of baking-powder, a little salt, and six ounces of suet, first skinned, then shredded, and lastly chopped as finely as it can be; for this a sharp knife and a well-floured board are essential. After mixing the dry ingredients, enough cold water must be added to make a stiff crust, the stiffer the lighter; it must be well boiled whatever the kind of pudding it is used for.

A WET DAY IN LONDON.



A WATERSPOUT.

IS there anything more conducive to a selfish state of mind than a wet, sloppy day in the streets of London? Each person seems to vie with the other in making his neighbour as uncomfortable as he can.

If you stay for a moment to look in a shop window,

though you may be buttoned and mackintoshed to the chin, you are lucky if a lady does not give herself the privilege of placing a rib of her umbrella in close proximity to your ear, and allow its trickling rivulet to wander down your neck.

As you walk along, your feet splash, splash on the slushy pavement, and the little muddy drops disport themselves on your nether garments, till you are ashamed to be seen—for there is so much self-consciousness in humanity that one forgets that under such circumstances each is intent on himself.

If you happen to be a woman, you are in dire dread lest the edges of your petticoats are becoming artistically plastered.

You turn round to gather them up in your hand to cross the road, and in so doing deluge your foot in a

puddle, and extricate it in all the glory of its tell-tale mark. You soon get tired, and make up your mind, in spite of all previous economical resolutions, that it is worth twopence to reach your destination under cover.

You stand—a human target—at the corner of the street waiting for an omnibus, feeling out of humour with every one, for there is something unpleasantly



CROSSING THE ROAD.