

DELICACIES FOR THE WINTER TEA-TABLE.

BY P. H. DAVIS.



VARIETY is charming"—at least the old saying hath it thus—and as my writings on "Summer Tea-Table Delicacies" proved so acceptable, I continue the series by adding some seasonable articles when the days are colder, and the appetite demands something a little more substantial than in summer. I diverge widely from the beaten track by including

only those novelties which I do not think have ever been published previously, and as all of them have been tested by myself, it may be accepted that they are reliable, and the recipes may be followed with confidence. I have only to repeat my request, which appeared in the June issue of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE, that those who would follow out my recipes will kindly do them the justice to use exactly the proportions given, and neither more nor less, because all the ingredients have been carefully adjusted with the object of preventing any failures.

I lead off with a very old-fashioned article indeed, which I have reconstructed and improved almost beyond recognition, and if it is served warm with a nice sweet sauce, it will be quite a novelty to-day; although, by-the-by, it may also be served cold with boiled custard, and I am certain will then be equally well appreciated. I will call it an

APPLE MOULD.

Commence by removing the peels and cores from some nice juicy apples, but do not cut up the fruit too small. Take the pieces of apple and put them into a stew-pan, with the peel of a fresh lemon and sufficient white sugar to suit the palate. Just cover them with water, stand them at the side of the fire, and then let them slowly simmer until they become a pulp. Remove the stew-pan from the fire, and, after taking out the lemon-peel, beat the apple pulp until it is perfectly smooth, when allow it to get cold. Now beat up two eggs until they froth, and amalgamate this with the apple pulp, and follow by the addition of two ounces of melted fresh butter and the same weight of stale crumbs of white bread. Whisk everything together until thoroughly mixed.

Take a mould of any pattern, prepare the inside of it by smearing it with creamed butter, and dredge that over thickly with more bread-crumbs. Into this pour the apple mixture, sprinkle the top over very thickly with bread-crumbs once again, and then bake in a moderate oven. Turn it out of the mould carefully, and serve either hot or cold, as directed above.

If other spices or flavourings are approved, they may be added to the apple mixture when it is quite cold, and just before it is put into the mould.

I recently took a summer trip to the Continent, and in the course of my rambles stayed in Belgium for a few days. There I met the very best sample of novel gingerbread that I had ever come across, and after some investigation I evolved a recipe for it, which I now append:—

ORANGE GINGERBREAD.

1½ lbs. flour; 8 oz. treacle; 6 oz. brown sugar; 4 oz. butter; 4 oz. finely chopped candied orange-peel; 1 oz. baking powder; 2 eggs; 10 or 12 drops aniseed flavouring.

Method.—Sift the baking powder and flour together; make a bay in the centre, into which put the sugar and orange-peel; add the treacle, and then melt the butter and pour that in. Add the slight flavouring of aniseed. Whisk the eggs, and pour them into the central hollow; then mix all together in the bay, and work all up to a dough. Break it into small pieces, and place them in well-buttered pans. Sprinkle some caraway seeds over the tops, and bake in a warm oven. When baked, dredge some fine sugar over them, after having lightly brushed the tops with whipped whites of eggs.

Germany has many peculiarities which, I think, might readily be introduced into the *cuisine* of this kingdom, and from amongst other varied toothsome delicacies of the Fatherland I select for my present paper a recipe of an original

GERMAN NEW YEAR CAKE.

1 lb. flour; 12 oz. castor sugar; 8 oz. butter; 4 oz. sultanas (washed and dried); 4 oz. mixed drained candied peel (cut small); 5 eggs; a small teaspoonful of essence of lemon.

Method.—Beat the sugar and butter to a light cream in a warm pan. Whisk the eggs to a very light froth, and stir them into the cream. Add the essence of lemon, the sultanas, and peel, and then lightly stir in the flour. Turn the mixture into a baking tin which has been lined with buttered paper, and bake it in a moderate oven.

When it has become partly cooled, cover the top and sides with a thin icing, made with fine castor sugar and hot water, and coloured pink with a little liquid cochineal.

I add another German recipe, which I think will be welcomed at this time of the year, and I am certain it will prove itself to be a novelty of no mean order. Certainly it deserves attention, and the results of experiments which I have made with the recipe have been so highly satisfactory that the desire to include it is irresistible.

POTATO BUNS.

1 lb. flour; 8 oz. boiled potatoes (carefully peeled and mashed); 8 oz. castor sugar; 8 oz. butter; 6 oz.

currants (picked, washed, and dried); 1 oz. dried yeast; 1 egg; half-pint of milk; a pinch of salt.

Method.—Rub the butter into the flour, and make a space in the centre. Add in the sugar and currants. Make half the milk lukewarm, and dissolve the yeast in it, and pour that into the bay. Stir the rest of the milk into the potatoes, and put that into the bay likewise. Beat the egg, and add that in also. Drop in a pinch of salt, stir all together, and mix everything up to a dough. Cover it over with a cloth, and let it lie for half an hour. Then break it into small pieces, mould them round, place them on buttered tins, and when they have swelled to twice their size, bake them in a sharp oven. While hot, wash them over with egg to glaze them.

Having given a New Year cake, it naturally follows that a recipe for an inexpensive and easily made Christmas cake is in order, and I therefore append it, although I have simplified the recipe as far as possible, and that with the main idea of producing an excellent result at a moderate cost. I have only to ask that my readers will kindly use the proportions given, and not deviate from them in any way.

CHRISTMAS CAKE.

1½ lbs. flour; 1 lb. castor sugar; 1 lb. butter; 1 lb. sultanas (washed and dried); 1 lb. currants (washed, picked, and dried); 12 oz. mixed drained candied peel (cut fine); 9 eggs; fruit flavouring of any kind—lemon, orange, raspberry, pineapple, &c.—quantity to taste.

Method.—Proceed exactly as for “German New Year Cake,” but remember that this cake will require more soaking in the oven. Try if it is done by the old method of pushing a thin splint of dry wood into

the centre, and if that comes out dry the cake is done; if wet, and the cake sticks to the splint, it requires more soaking. When it is covered with icing, stick a few small fancy sugar ornaments about it, and put some fancy frilled coloured papers round the sides.

I conclude the present paper with a recipe for an article which has gained great favour in Switzerland and the north of Italy—say the Tyrol district—and I am satisfied that the result will commend itself to those who prefer to depart from the beaten track, and desire a thorough novelty for the tea-table. I have rarely met with any simple combination of ingredients which produces so excellent a result if carefully manipulated, and therefore I have every confidence in hinting that those who follow the recipe will be perfectly satisfied with the experiment.

CHOCOLATE TEA-CAKES.

8 oz. flour; 6 oz. castor sugar; 6 oz. butter; 4 oz. ground chocolate; 4 eggs; half-teaspoonful vanilla flavouring.

Method.—Beat the butter to a cream in a warm pan, add in the sugar, and beat both well. Whisk the eggs to a light froth, and stir them into the cream. Add a slight flavouring of vanilla, then lightly mix in the flour and chocolate. With a spoon drop the mixture on buttered flat tins, each cake the size of a large chestnut. Dust some fine sugar over them, and bake them in a warm oven.

Note.—If chocolate is not available, the same result may be obtained by substituting for it *two* ounces of perfectly pure cocoa powder, and then adding two ounces of extra sugar and a dozen more drops of vanilla flavouring. Chocolate is only cocoa, sugar, and vanilla flavouring, and therefore can easily be produced.

THE DOUBLE X MYSTERY.

BY THOMAS KEYWORTH, AUTHOR OF “MISTRESS JUNE,” ETC.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.



HIS was the brief notice which appeared in the *Yorkshire Mercury* :—

“On the 12th inst., at High Scout, Ichabod William Sunderland, aged 49. Australian papers, please copy.”

It was among the DEATHS, and there could be no doubt about the meaning of it, even if the people who manifested most interest in the announcement had not known already that Ichabod William Sunderland was dead.

But who was responsible for the request that Australian papers would copy the notice?

“Sunderland had lived out there, and it was only natural that people in that part of the world should be informed of his decease,” was suggested.

That was not the point. Who had asked the newspapers to insert it? Half-a-crown was charged if there happened to be any addition to the simple statement of birth, marriage, or death. Who had paid the half-crown?

That was a puzzle. No inquiries among the kinsfolk of the late Ichabod William elicited any satisfactory information.

Ehud Sunderland declared that he was own cousin to Ichabod, but he did not pick up half-crowns on the road-side, and he was not likely to spend that amount for nothing. When he said so, the most sceptical mind would have been immediately convinced.

Lemuel Walker informed everybody, what they knew already, that he had married Adah Sunderland, who was Ichabod's second cousin, but he was never two-and-sixpence richer for any kinship with the dead man, and he was not intending to begin squandering his loose change at that time of life.