

SOME AUSTRIAN SWEETS.



It has been said by an authority, that throughout Austria the puddings have reached the summit of perfection; the same may be said of the sweets generally, many of which are of such a nature that they are as acceptable at one meal as another, and serve the purpose of a pudding or a cake. Cleanliness is a leading feature, and one reads again and again, in directions for the making of delicate dishes, that the hand should not be used where it can possibly be avoided. The use of porcelain utensils in the form of rolling-pins, pastry cutters and the like, has much to recommend it. Such articles are kept cleaner than when made of wood, while the material equals marble in its coolness.

Tyroler Zelten.—This is a dish that would be certain of a welcome, though very cheap, and there are many ways of sending it to table. It is first-rate with a simple sweet sauce, as a pudding; and, with butter, it may go in either hot or cold for tea. Those who bake at home would do well to try it, for any nice light yeast dough will form the foundation. Supposing a pound and a half of dough, take about half a pound of the following materials, mixed: raisins, currants, figs, and almonds, the latter in small quantity only; then season well with cinnamon, or any spice to taste, and add some grated lemon peel. All the fruits should be finely divided, and the mixing should be very thorough. This is sometimes baked as a cake, or it may be rolled and baked as a pudding. When done, a shiny surface is secured by a sprinkling of sugar, and the use of the salamander, for appearances are by no means forgotten in Austria, and many simple dishes are raised from the commonplace to the high class by care in the finishing touches.

Lemon Chandeau.—This sauce is so good with almost every sort of sweet that it deserves to become a standing dish in any household, and we need scarcely say that it is delicious with the above dish. The materials are a couple of good lemons, water, four eggs, and four ounces of sugar, and it is to the method rather than the cost that the success is due. Watch an Austrian cook peel those lemons, and you might almost read through the rind; certainly you will find it as yellow on the inner as the outer side, but only the rind of one will be put in the above sauce. The juice is carefully strained, for pips would spoil it; it is then left to blend with water, to make half-a-pint, in a covered vessel for some time. The yolks of eggs go next, and the whole is whisked over the fire, and carefully watched that it does not boil. Those who know how to make chocolate by the process termed "milling" will have no difficulty in making this sauce. This is ready for serving in the hot state, but as a cold sauce there is a further treat in store. The sauce is beaten until cool, then the whites of the eggs are put

in, and what a mass of sauce these materials make; but the eggs must be fresh, and let none cease beating the whites until they are stiff enough to bear the weight of a raw egg.

There seems, at first glance, nothing to warrant the excellence of a dish called *Dampfknudeln*, for the ingredients are homely enough for use in any kitchen; but when one considers the perfection of the flour of the country, and the care taken in sieving it, combined with the energy that is thrown into the kneading of the dough, one begins to understand the delicious lightness of these dainties. A pint of flour will make a good number; to it should be put a pinch of salt, and a dash of sugar, about an ounce; the less sugar, the lighter the dough; this fact is undeniable. An ounce of the freshest of dried yeast, if one may use such a term, is next added, with enough lukewarm milk to make a leaven; then a couple of ounces of butter and two eggs must be added, with as much more milk as is needed, and the whole left to rise, when, after the final kneading, the dough is cut into lumps, which emerge from the oven not unlike the penny sponge cakes with which we are all familiar, but so puffed up and so brown; and are not these perfections due mostly to the *peeps* that a too-anxious English cook will often take during the baking process? We think so. When served with a sweet sauce, as they often are, and they are just as delicious with jam, the sugar may be left out altogether. The salamander, or its substitute, an old shovel, gives the last touch to these.

Here is a very peculiar pudding; only a sort of roly-poly made from apples. Are you tired of apple puddings as usually met with? If so, try this, and you will not shelve it afterwards. The foundation is a plain sheet of pastry, but mixed with lukewarm water instead of cold, and strewn with bread crumbs that have been fried in butter to a dainty crispness. The next layer is composed of apples in slices, raisins and currants, and the indispensable cinnamon—a spice much favoured by the Austrians. This is then rolled and baked, and served with dissolved butter poured over it generally, but we venture to recommend a nice sweet sauce, served apart, as the more enjoyable. Those who will take the trouble to fry a few more crumbs to sprinkle on the outside when the pudding is dished, will probably agree with us that the taste and appearance are improved; but this is an English innovation.

Next on our list comes a pudding that, judging from the materials, is only a batter pudding of the ordinary sort, except that there is a good proportion of eggs in it; but we will not pass it over, it is so good as to be more like a soufflé, but to eat it in perfection the flour of the country must be used for it, and a fire-proof china dish is required for the baking. A quarter of a pound of flour, half-a-pint of milk, an ounce of sugar, a saltspoonful of salt, and five eggs. These are the

materials; it is the blending that does most to bring about perfection. After beating the flour and milk until as smooth as cream, the yolks of eggs are put in, with the sugar and salt, and the mixture left awhile. Then the whites are added in the same frothy condition above referred to, and there is art in the way in which they are mixed in; a few strokes of the whisk only, *no beating*, to make them fall again; and not a moment is lost in pouring this delicious batter into the dish, in which a couple of ounces of butter have been heated.

The sight of this makes one hungry, for it equals an omelette in appearance. It may be noted that no flavouring is mentioned in connection with this dish; there are, however, many suitable ones. Amongst the most delicious are vanilla sugar, orange flower water, rose water, or any essence of good quality; but it must be remembered that when a liquid of the nature of either of these waters is employed the milk should be proportionately reduced. We may be pardoned for reminding the reader that butter *is* butter in Austria; no concoction that would be considered unfit for table would find a place in such a pudding as this, and the eggs would be really fresh.

A dish that will commend itself to the juvenile members of the family is an *Auftauf*, made from jam. This is nothing more or less than a meringue mixture, mixed with jam, of which apricot is favourite. For the whites of four eggs, the same number of tablespoonfuls of white sugar, and about the same, or a trifle less, of jam would be used. The mixing takes some time, a little of each being put in the bowl and whisked well. When all are used up the mass is piled on a dish, and a goodly pile it makes; then baked, or we might say dried, in the oven, so slow is it, until a pale brown. It is eaten hot or cold; in the latter form it is a good dish for a children's party, eaten of course in moderation.

Speaking of the children reminds us of a dainty *Snow Cake*. Butter, sugar, and flour, in equal weights, are wanted for this, and for twelve ounces of the mixture the whites of four eggs; the best flavouring for it is grated lemon peel. The ordinary method of creaming the butter and sugar is followed, the flour is sifted in by slow degrees, and most carefully blended (you will not find an Austrian cook beating it), the eggs, beaten to a snowy pile, are put in with the same light touch, and when baked with care there are few more delicious cakes than this. Those who would like a novel pudding should try this hot, with the lemon sauce above; the combination is first-rate, and in this case we advise that the sauce be poured over the cake, to soak it a little. A cake similar to the above is composed of equal parts of corn flour and wheaten flour. Another owes its goodness to a mixture of potato flour and wheaten flour; by the latter we refer to the fine flour of Austria.

Here is an old friend, with a very new face, in the shape of *Potato Pudding*. In some cases there may not be much in a name, but those who may try this will own that there is a good deal in method. But the

mixing! We dare not venture to give this in the original, for who can give the hour demanded for the blending of the materials? Well, we have found it so excellent when made in less than half the time that we make no apology for the deviation. The materials are a quarter of a pound of mashed potatoes, the same weight of sugar, and four whole eggs, with the yolks of four more for a first-class pudding; but the four alone will bring about very good results if the potatoes be increased by an ounce, and a tablespoonful or two of milk be put in. The dryness of the potatoes is of primary importance, and if they are not sieved the pudding will be but a poor substitute for the original. The best way to make this is to whisk the ingredients until they resemble a thick custard, or thin batter. The flavouring is a matter for the individual, and so is the sauce; a very good one is made from thin melted butter, with a nice jam or fruit jelly mixed in, or some fruit syrup is just as good. The mould should be thickly buttered, and coated with bread crumbs; and the oven should be gentle.

A sweet famed through Austria is made from a mixture of chocolate, bread crumbs, sugar, eggs, almonds and spice. The peculiarity consists in the unpeeled condition of the almonds. We must say that, having tried this in both forms, we give the preference, both on the ground of flavour and digestion, to the peeled almonds of every-day life. A very nice sweet of this sort is to be had from four eggs, to two ounces each of the other materials; but many will increase the sugar to four ounces, and the varieties of spices that are used are many. Cinnamon with nutmeg is a favourite, but we prefer the old combination of vanilla and almonds, which perhaps many have never tried, for one would hardly think that the result would be good; but it is, in our opinion. This wants careful baking.

Cherry Cake must close our list, and it is an excellent illustration of a cake and pudding in one. About a pint of bread crumbs will form the basis of a good-sized one, and to them should be added half their weight of fine sugar, three eggs, the chopped peel of half a lemon, and a generous handful of ripe cherries, the darker and juicier the better. For this, half an hour's beating is demanded, and at the last the whites of two more eggs should go in. The custom of adding some of the eggs at the end, and with the whites separately whisked, is almost universal, and those who are inclined to begrudge the trouble, or think there is "nothing in it," a term we have often heard, should note the difference in size and lightness of a pudding so made, and one to which the eggs are added in the ordinary manner. This is baked in a buttered mould lined with bread crumbs, and served hot or cold, and with sauce or without. This principle, we may say in conclusion, may be carried out with other fruit as well as cherries. We have an idea that damsons would yield a delicious dish of this sort; and we are sure that any fruit juice, boiled to a syrup with sugar, and served as sauce, will recommend itself.