

## Candies.

**H**AVE been pulling candy ideas with a confectioner, and he tells me the oddest things concerning sweets! Fashion sways the candy world, too, it seems, and we must chew as well as dress fashionably. Crushed strawberry and terra-cotta chips were the nibbling thing last summer, but those two shades having joined the procession of departed colors, brown, dark red, and gray chips, are crunched instead. This particular confectioner showed me under his dozen or two counters three tons of candy destined for out-of-town candy-loving people.

"You can have no idea," he said, "the vast amount of all sorts of sugared food we sell. Why, one of my gentlemen customers buys seven pounds of candy every day, and always insists that they be placed in seven different candy boxes." I have often thought that seven feminine hearts are made glad six days a week.

I saw ropes of molasses candy so thick and long that it took two men to work each end. I suggested to the sweet gentleman that by the yard would be the proper way to sell this latter.

A cake ornament attracted my eye. It was fully five feet high and a gem in its way. The base had a true-lovers' knot embroidery around it and orange blossoms in bass-relief so to speak; a marriage bell with an orange-blossom tongue swung from a vine-covered arbor, and on either side were beautifully shaped trumpets filled with orange blossoms. Now, be it understood that these blossoms, as well as the entire ornament, were made of sugar. Standing hand in hand on the flat base are a sugar bride and groom. The bride wears satin, lace and flowers, like a "meat bride," as my little niece calls a lady about to be married; and hanging from her ears are crystallized sugar jewels. The miniature groom is costumed like a restaurant waiter, consequently like a gentleman of fashion, and looks with sugared violet eyes into those of his sweet bride. It is indeed a triumph of cake ornamentation.

"Do you know I was sued once by a bride?—and this is how it was: Some years ago I made cakes as well as the ornaments, and I sent a most magnificent one to a very fashionable wedding. The price was one hundred dollars, and it looked a beauty. Well, about a week after the wedding the bride's mother came to me and told me that never in her life had she experienced such intense mortification as on the evening of her daughter's marriage. True to old-time custom, the bride made the first incision in the wedding cake. The moment the knife touched the cake's interior, the whole structure came tumbling down on the table, the floor, and the bride. The cake was burned to a crisp inside, and went like dew before the sun. I couldn't find out who had baked that particular cake, as I had so many pastry cooks, and though I offered to compromise with the lady, she declared I should pay for her mortification, and I did. You don't catch me making cakes again. I make only the ornaments, and it is a business by itself.

Talk about queer names! Listen: "Heart's-blood gumdrops"—don't that sound blood-curdling?—"Chewing Cosacks," "Cream Prince Carnivals," "Moonshines," "Topolobampo Trade Dollars," "Topolobampo Turtles," "Topolobampo Mice."

I ate a few of these, and they were not so jaw-breaking as their names would imply—"Chocolate Twists," and "Glucose Babs," "Chocolate Liquor," and "Golden Crown Marshmallows," and so on to a thousand different varieties of bonbons.

There are to be all sorts of fruits candied for the holidays never before attempted, and if this sort of thing continues,

the dentist will be the richest and most important person of any man around.

I am sorry to leave so sweet a subject, and one that is so much a matter of taste, but I must. So, *au revoir*.

FLIT.

## Talks with the Young Ladies of Clifford.

**O** you think," says Miss Bently, "that books of etiquette do the least bit of good?"

"And why," say I, rather impolitely answering her question with another, "should they not do good?"

"Oh, because they are such absurd things. Fancy being told not to roll your eyes about like a duck when you drink your tea; what excessively useful advice that is."

"Useful indeed," I say, "for those who know no better; and I can assure you there are plenty of people who don't."

"But would such people read a work on etiquette?" questions Miss Maltby.

"Yes, I think many of them would," I say. "Even uncultivated people are very anxious to learn enough of the 'science of manners' to appear well in company. In the single room of a log cabin in the very Far West, I once saw a few volumes on a little rough corner shelf, and something better than curiosity led me to go over and examine them. There were a few old school books, a Bible, a work on metals and mining and 'The Complete Manual of Etiquette for Gentlemen.' I looked at the two big flannel-shirted sons of the old owner of the cabin with a good deal of interest after that, as they helped us repair the damage to our harness, which an accident had caused. It was rather pathetic to think that the poor fellows might be struggling to prepare themselves to pass muster in circles they might never enter. But after all, this is a wonderful country, and those very men may represent us at foreign courts before they die."

"Well, if they do," says Miss Nolan, pathetically, "I only hope they will have studied the Complete Manual enough to know that they must not feed themselves with their knives, as the London *Times* says all Americans of good position do."

"What a base libel," I exclaim with indignation. "I know of American tables where every detail of eating is as elegant and refined as a matter so material, and perhaps one might say gross, can possibly be in any country. I once saw an Italian countess rinse her mouth very thoroughly at a dinner table, using her finger bowl for a slop bowl. She was not an adventuress, either, but a well authenticated countess. It came into my mind when I saw the pleasing operation, that if an American had committed such a breach of decency, our national reputation would have suffered in consequence. I think foreigners are disposed to be severe on us all; the mistake they make is in classing us all together. We have our grades in breeding as well as they, and the distinctions are very palpable, if they would do us the honor to investigate a little."

"When my uncle was minister to England," remarks Miss Newbold, a young lady who is visiting in Clifford, "a lady where my aunt went to a lunch asked her 'if she didn't feel like a little cold mutton pie?' That was not a particularly elegant way of offering to help her to some, was it?"

"It was very funny," I say, "and very equivocal. I never heard exactly that form of expression before, and probably it is just as uncommon among the best class as the disagreeable utterances we are all given credit for, because they are heard from the lips of a few."

"But English people of the higher classes are extremely

nice about their table manners, I have heard my aunt say," continues Miss Newbold.

"Undoubtedly they are, and I wish we were all more particular in training children on such points."

"There are some things no one can eat gracefully," says Miss Nolan, "because you have to use your fingers. Now, fond as I am of green corn, I had rather go without it than cut it from the cob, as very particular folks do."

"So had I," I answer, "but I see no reason why we should deprive ourselves of the pleasure of eating it in our favorite way. The heat of an ear of corn dries it immediately, and taking it in the fingers will not soil them; one is not obliged to gnaw and gnash noisily like a pig, but any one can eat it quietly and in a way that will not be in the least offensive to others, which, after all, is the first consideration in table etiquette."

"Asparagus?" says Miss Bently, doubtfully.

"Yes, asparagus may with perfect propriety be taken up in the fingers, by the clean white stalk which is left on for a handle; and to facilitate handling it neatly, it is now customary to serve it without dressing, passing the accompanying cream sauce in a tureen and allowing persons themselves to put it on only over the heads of the asparagus, or upon the sides of their plates, where each stalk can be dipped in as it is lifted. Olives, radishes and celery may also be taken in the fingers, and as many people judge of baked potatoes by the touch, there is no impropriety in so selecting one when the dish is passed, but it must be cut, not broken, when it is to be eaten, and a fork or knife used to turn it out from the skin. Fruit may be taken with the fingers, but it is proper to use a knife in preparing it. Finger bowls are very generally used, and after eating grapes, pears and other juicy fruits, they are indispensable. Instead of the little colored doilies which used to accompany them, small white napkins are now put upon the plates upon which the finger bowls are passed."

"Please tell me," says Miss Nolan, "whether it is polite to begin to eat before other people are helped or not. I never know exactly what I ought to do about it, and sometimes I feel a little embarrassed."

"It is proper to begin to eat as soon as you are helped," I say. "At a dinner, after the soup and fish courses are over you will be helped to meat, and you may, if you like, wait till the vegetables begin to be passed. In your own house you may follow whatever is your family custom, but when you are dining out it is not considered good taste for a guest to help herself to anything; she should wait to be served by an attendant. But if there is no waiter, a guest may very properly offer to help others, as well as herself, to whatever dish may chance to be in front of her."

"In Clifford, nobody, except a few summer people, keeps waiters," says Miss Bently, "and one gets so used to going without them, that it seems awkward, when away from home, to be so assiduously waited upon."

"Possibly it may, but remember, when you are being waited on, that custom requires you to let the waiter do it all; do not attempt to assist him by putting butter-plate, small dishes, etc., on your dinner plate, as people are sometimes good-naturedly disposed to do. Such consideration is usually a hindrance, for a well trained waiter preserves a sort of routine in clearing off the table, taking spoons and forks first, then knives, etc., etc., and interference is only disconcerting. Neither is it considered good form to push your glass toward the waiter when it is to be filled, or to lift your cup when asked if you will have it refilled. You may ask for what you like if hostess and attendants are not attentive enough to anticipate your wants, provided you do it agreeably, but you must make your wishes known with your tongue, unassisted by any indicative gesture with your hands; but do not forget

that there are certain things, such as soup, for instance, of which you must never take a "second help."

"Oh, dear," sighs Miss Bly, "what a lot of things you have to remember before you can be polite."

"Not so very many," I say. "These little points I have been speaking of may be called merely some of the fine touches which go to make up elegance."

"And helps to make the calm repose that distinguished Lady Clara Vere de Vere's manner," says Miss Nolan, who has been reading up on Tennyson.

"Lady Clara's manners may have been very good in spite of her heartlessness," I say, "and I was about to remark that it would be a great libel to say a person was lacking in true politeness because no attention was paid to these little things. As I have said before, the practice of the golden rule, Do unto others, etc.—I need not repeat what I am sure you all know so well—insures true politeness, and where that exists we should be slow to criticise small sins of omission and commission, which probably have their origin in the want of early training. In following the golden rule, one will, in every social relation of life, put one's self in the other one's place, so all such little rudenesses as making personal remarks, neglecting small attentions, keeping people waiting, failing to keep engagements and all the like exasperating and annoying habits, will be avoided on principle. So a disciple of that noble code of manners cannot possibly be very impolite."

"I think Christian politeness is the truest, because it really comes from the love of God and our fellow-men," says Miss Bently; "but I should be glad to know all the minor points, as you call them, so I could be always at ease and never fear committing a solecism."

"Yes, so should I," says one of the young ladies. "I should so dislike to be looked down upon and snubbed or laughed at just because I don't happen to know whether I ought to do this little thing or that little thing."

"If you were at the table of a really well bred family, you would not have to fear being snubbed or laughed at, for none but vulgar people will be guilty of such great rudeness. But I do not think there is the slightest fear that you will ever commit errors that would cause any one to even feel like smiling. I am sure you would be always ladylike, and a failure to conform to some unimportant custom, simply through ignorance, when in the main your manners are beyond condemnation, is not a matter of grave consequence. The real faults which deserve censure are those which are practiced in defiance of rules that are well understood."

"Would anybody do such a thing?"

"Surely too many do. I have seen some young people who seemed to pride themselves upon being supercilious and rude to older people, treating even the hostess who is entertaining them with scant courtesy, talking loud, and monopolizing—or trying to—the attention of the company, making no answer to remarks which are addressed to them, and persisting in a course of rudeness which make people long to subject them to some thorough polishing process. Such persons are sometimes very showy, and seem to imagine that they impress beholders with a high opinion of their consequence by acting as if they thought all the rest of the company were beneath them. It takes constant remembrance of what we owe to ourselves not to openly resent such incivility of manner."

"Do you think it is only young people who show such bad taste?" asks Miss Bently.

"No, I do not; but I think perhaps incivility is a little more offensive from the young. We rather expect them to be deferential to their elders at all times, and modest and retiring instead of loud and self-asserting, and we always experience a sense of disappointment when we meet the reverse of our ideal.

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