

to Frascati," she said. "She knows the place well, and has often spent weeks there making sketches of the scenery. You need have no fear for us if she consents, for she is the most prudent old Scotchwoman you could find anywhere. And Enid likes her. It would please Enid, and she deserves to be considered, for she has had a sad time with me of late. She little thought what she was taking upon herself when she agreed to come abroad with me."

To the satisfaction of everyone concerned, Miss Strutt willingly consented to accompany the girls to Frascati. Enid had now to busy herself with preparations for their departure. The studio had to be dismantled, and its pretty things packed away in boxes. This was melancholy work. Maud had desired that her treasures should be so packed that they might easily be forwarded to her in London.

"For I shall never come back to work at the Studio Mariano," she said with a sigh.

"You think so now," Enid had replied, "but you will feel differently when you are strong again. There is no reason why you should not come back."

"I know; but I shall not do so," Maud said. "It has all been such a failure somehow."

Enid understood, and said no more.

One afternoon when Enid returned from spending some time at the studio, Maud asked her if she had seen Miss Strutt.

"No," said Enid. "I knocked at her door, but she was out."

"She has been here. She did not know that you were at the studio. She hoped she might meet you on the way back."

"I went into a shop," said Enid, "so that is how we missed each other. Was she here long?"

"Yes. She stayed and talked with me for some time. She is making all sorts of plans for our enjoyment at Frascati. She is a kind old soul, Enid."

"She is indeed," said Enid. "I am glad you have found that out."

"Only think, Enid; she says that Mrs. Dakin and Julius came home last night."

"Indeed!" Enid bent hastily to inhale the perfume of a pot of heliotrope which stood near the window.

"Yes. I had no idea they would be home so soon. I am very glad."

"Are you?" Enid would have given anything to be able to speak carelessly, but she was feeling intensely nervous, and her manner showed it.

"Are not you glad, Enid?"

Enid ignored the question, and said—"Did Miss Strutt tell you any news of Julius Dakin?"

"No, indeed. What news should she tell me?"

"Oh, I did not know if you had heard. I was told the other day that he was engaged to Miss Amory."

"Who told you that?"

"It was Miss Guy."

"Then I don't believe it is true," said Maud.

"Oh, yes, I think it is true," returned Enid nervously.

"Why should you? You know we have not always found Miss Guy's statements trustworthy."

Enid was silent. It had never occurred to her to doubt the accuracy of the intelligence given by Miss Guy.

"Do you hope that it is not true, Maud?" she asked presently.

"For some reasons I do," replied her cousin quietly.

Enid was still giving her attention to the flowers. She had not ventured to look at her cousin, but now as Maud spoke she stole a glance at her. It was not as she had feared. Maud's face did indeed wear a thoughtful expression as she leaned back upon her cushions; but it was hardly a troubled look. She had not grown pale, nor did she show any sign of excessive agitation. And when Enid looked again Maud was actually smiling.

"When did Miss Guy tell you this?" she asked.

"More than a week ago," said Enid.

"I met her in the Piazza di Spagna, as I was going for a walk."

"And you never told me—you never said a word of it till now. You naughty Enid! I know why you kept it from me. You thought, did you not, that it would hurt me to hear of Julius Dakin's engagement?"

Enid coloured guiltily, and could say nothing.

"I thought so," said Maud laughing.

"Well, I will be frank with you. Some time ago it might have disturbed me to

hear such news. I believe I was silly enough to think that I—I cared for Julius Dakin. But I was cured of that folly when I heard the way in which he spoke of me that day in the studio. I don't know whether it was my heart or my vanity that felt the wound, but it was a wound. I could never feel the same towards Julius Dakin afterwards."

"It was very wrong of him to say what he did," said Enid.

"And yet he was right. The truth in his words made them sting the more. I was a joke as an artist—I can see that now."

"You were not, Maud," replied Enid; "you have a genuine love for everything that is beautiful; you have fine taste; you have the instincts of an artist."

"Without the power," observed Maud drily. "Well, we will not discuss that. I am thinking about Miss Amory. I never liked the idea of Julius' marrying her, even after I had ceased to have silly fancies about myself; but now I really do not care whether he marries her or not. It is wonderful the change in one that an illness like mine makes. I feel quite another being, and my past life, with all its hopes and fears, seems a long, long way off, and so dreamlike—the experience of some one else rather than my own. Still, I am surprised at Julius Dakin. He always used to laugh so at Miss Amory; I never thought he could really care for her. But she is very rich, and men are incomprehensible beings."

"They are indeed," said Enid.

"There is one man, though, whom I thoroughly believe in," said Maud, with sudden energy, "and that is my dreadful friend and mentor, Sydney Althorp. Do you know that he is to be my father's partner? Father has been telling me about it this morning."

"I thought it would be so," replied Enid, "and I am very glad."

"I need not have distressed myself," she thought, as she went away to her own room. "I need not have feared that Maud would break her heart for Julius Dakin's sake. What a difference it would have made to me if I had known the truth before! But I am thankful—oh yes!—I am most thankful that I acted as I did."

(To be continued.)

## FANCY BUTTER: HOW TO MAKE IT.

By A CERTIFICATED BUTTER-MAKER.

THERE are doubtless many girls who greatly regret the unappetising appearance which butter often presents on coming to table in the form of misshapen or badly-printed pats; but perhaps there are not many who know how easily this may be remedied, and the butter made to look fresh and nice, and even ornamental. I am referring to the making-up of fancy butter, which is such simple, pretty work that it is to be wondered it is not more generally practised.

Any girl may teach herself to do it with a little perseverance and attention to a few

simple rules, while the only appliances required are a pair of wooden butter-hands, or, as they are generally called, Scotch hands, and a few dozen sheets of butter-paper, both of which may be got at any place where dairy requisites are sold. The cost is trifling, a pair of the hands, of quite sufficiently good quality, being obtainable from about half-a-crown. When buying them, however, it should be noticed that they are serrated *lengthways* on one side, as they are sometimes made plain, which is not advisable for this kind of work.

There are two points to be considered before

commencing the actual making-up of the butter, viz., the condition of the butter, and the preparation of the Scotch hands and butter-paper.

With regard to the first, the butter should be neither very soft nor extremely hard, as both these conditions, for obvious reasons, prevent its being easily and neatly manipulated.

In hot weather, when the former of these troubles is prevalent, the butter should be taken into the cellar over night; or, where this cannot be done, putting the butter into a basin, and allowing this basin to stand all night in

a second vessel filled with cold water, will greatly tend to make it firm. In either case the making-up should be done as early as possible the next morning, and in a cool place.

On the other hand, in the winter butter will often become so hard as to render working it almost impossible; in which case it should be placed in the kitchen for a few hours before it is made up, care being taken that it is not subjected to too great a change of temperature, or it will become sticky on the outside, when all hope of handling it must be given up until it has once more got firm.

The second point to be considered is the preparation of the Scotch hands and butter-paper in such a manner as to prevent the butter adhering to them. For this purpose the Scotch hands should first of all be plunged into boiling water for a few minutes, and then placed in cold until they are cool. Take them up, and to each one allow a lump of salt the size of a walnut, which must be well brushed all over them, an ordinary scrubbing-brush, if quite clean, serving for this purpose very well, though a smaller and softer brush is more convenient. Rinse them to clear away the salt, and allow them to lie in a bowl of cold water until ready to use them.

The greatest attention should be given to this point, as on it hinges the success of the whole process. It is practically impossible to do this kind of work satisfactorily if the butter adheres to the Scotch hands in the slightest, which it will be almost certain to do if they are not most carefully prepared in the way just indicated.

The butter-paper merely requires dipping into cold water and squeezing fairly dry. It does not tear readily, and a sheet or two spread on any clean slab or table will allow of the butter being worked on it without sticking to it in the least. The same sheet, however, should not be used on more than one occasion.

Both the Scotch hands and the paper should be kept moist while being used, as it is only when wet that they are proof against the butter adhering to them.

Having given attention to these various details, the actual business of making-up may commence. To make a pat in the shape of a brick is the first step, and beginners will be almost certain to find that this is not by any means so easy as it seems.

Take a lump of the butter to be made up (about a quarter of a pound is a convenient size), and lay it on the sheet of paper before you; then with the Scotch hands, using, of

course, the serrated side, turn it rapidly over and over, with a rotatory motion, until it has assumed the form of an elongated roll.

It is difficult to describe this movement, which can only be acquired with practice; but once mastered, the use of the Scotch hands becomes familiar, and the rest is easy.

We left our butter in the form of a long roll, which must be brought to the required length by gently compressing the two ends, care being taken to press *equally* with each hand, so as to avoid getting the pat thicker at one end than the other. Now proceed to flatten the remaining four sides by pressing, first one, and then another, with the Scotch hands, until the pat has assumed the shape of a brick, and is as level and well-proportioned as possible. It must be prevented from becoming too long, as it will be apt to do during this process, by occasionally compressing the ends in the same way as at first.

The top and sides may now be ornamented according to fancy, by cutting lines, squares, diamonds, etc., on them with the thin end of the Scotch hand, care being taken not to spoil the shape of the pat while this is being done.

The difficulties of the brick-shaped pat overcome, more elaborate work may be attempted.

A very pretty thing to make is a basket. Take for the foundation a lump of butter of from a quarter to half a pound in weight, according to size required. Shape it into an oblong or square, and hollow out the middle as much after the fashion of a basket as possible. Make a number of marbles, varying from the size of a small walnut to that of a pea (these are shaped by simply rolling the lump of butter between the Scotch hands), and fill the hollow in the basket with them, putting the largest in first, and piling the small ones on the top as high as they will stand. There is a two-fold object in this piling—it gives the basket a filled appearance, and, what is of greater importance, acts as a support to the handle when it is on.

To make the handle, take three pieces of butter, from the size of a walnut to that of an egg (in proportion to the size of the basket), and roll them out separately into long coils about as thick as the little finger. The Scotch hand must be used *lengthways* for this purpose, to avoid cutting the coils. Made in this way, however, they will be quite smooth, and must be marked by pressing them very gently with the hand held *breadthways*, in order that they may match the rest of the basket.

When finished, lay them side by side and join them at the top, and then proceed to form a plait by laying them one over each other in the order required. Join them at the other end, and lift the whole gently on to the basket, fixing it in position by pressing the ends of the plait to the sides of the basket, allowing it to rest on the contents, as before intimated.

These baskets may be further ornamented by laying a smaller plait all round the outside of the foundation, the shape of which may also be varied if desired.

A very pretty idea is, instead of filling with the butter marbles, to use fruit, such as strawberries or currants, though in this case, of course, the flavour of the butter becomes a secondary consideration to its appearance.

All manner of ornamental shapes may be made in butter, with no other appliances whatever but the Scotch hands. Swans with hollow bodies, which may be filled in the same way as the baskets, snakes, small loaves, and rolls, are a few of them; but the maker may tax her fancy or ingenuity to almost any extent.

A capital imitation of a yellow rose-bud may be made by pressing small pieces of butter as thin as a wafer between the plain sides of the Scotch hands and laying them one over the other in the half-curved fashion of the leaves of an opening rose. This is rather difficult, owing to the butter being required so very thin, but the imitation is wonderfully good when neatly managed.

Should even greater variety be desired than can be obtained with the Scotch hands alone, small wooden butter-prints may be purchased of almost any pattern, and the butter stamped with them after it is made up into squares, rolls, etc. These are prepared for use in the same way as the Scotch hands.

There is one important fact to be remembered by all who would excel in this art, which is, the work must be done quickly. Overworking butter breaks down and destroys what is technically known as the "grain," thereby greatly impairing its flavour and keeping properties. Speed as well as dexterity should therefore be aimed at.

Another point is, never to touch the butter with the naked hand. Apart from the scientific reasons for this rule, which need not be discussed here, there are very few people who can handle butter without its adhering to the fingers, and so causing loss of butter, time, and patience.

## ELGIVA'S STEPFATHER.

By ALICE KING.

### CHAPTER II.



Mr. Gilchrist's arrival. They had been talking with him for an hour on the terrace, and now they were all gone to their rooms to get ready for dinner.

o, Mr. Gilchrist was certainly not at all the man they had expected him to be. That was the thought which rose simultaneously to the lips of both Elgiva Champney and Miss Mavisyn the first moment they were alone together after

"People are in general better looking than their photographs," said Elgiva; "but with him it is decidedly the reverse. Just look at this one of him here in my album—what a nice expression it has! But I can see nothing of it in his face—can you?"

"No, I don't think I can," replied Miss Mavisyn slowly.

She was sorry to say a word to influence the mind of the girl against her stepfather, and yet truth compelled her to speak as she had just done.

"I can't make out the expression in his eyes," went on Elgiva. "It is like one of those strange characters that they find in the East engraved on old stones, but the meaning of which no one can interpret. And then his smile—it is always there, and always exactly the same, like the smile of a painted mask."

"It is always a pity, my dear, to draw pictures of people in our minds before we see

them. If we do, we are almost certain to be disappointed in them."

"And his manner, too, is quite different from what I had fancied it would be," cried Elgiva. "It is kind in a certain way, but there is something laboured about it, as though he was always trying hard to be pleasant and genial."

"We must not judge too much by the appearance and manner—they often deceive us. Remember with what affection and respect your dear mother regarded him, and how she used to speak of him in her letters, and how nobly and generously she said he acted about money matters when she married him, and how kind and liberal he has been towards you in everything since he has been left your guardian."

"I tried hard to remember all that all the while I was with him; but somehow I could not make myself like him, and I could not at all picture mother as his wife."