

and is evidently not shy, but disposed to be confidential. As in duty bound, I begin.

"I hope you found your room comfortable, and that Keziah looked after you. Would you not like some refreshment after your journey? A glass of sherry, or a glass of ale, or—"

"I should like some tea presently very much," she says; "but just now I want to say what I could not before your servants. And that is to thank you for letting me come here, and being so ready and willing to receive me. I wrote my letter to you—let me see—last Tuesday week, so I reckoned that would give you a week to write and put me off, if you did not want me to come. And then it is so kind of you to let Patsey and Punch come too. Of course I haven't been able to have them at school, so some friends have been looking after them for me, and it does spoil dogs so for them to have so many different masters and mistresses."

"You seem very fond of your pets," I say, trying to look sympathetic, and rather wondering if her confidence will end with the dogs, or go on to something more interesting.

"Yes," she says. "Father bought them for me the last time he came home. You know," she goes on, growing still more at her ease, "I hardly ever saw father. He was in India before I was born, and he only came home twice in nineteen years. So I have always been at school, holidays and all, except when now and then I went to stay with some of the girls."

"That must have been a dull life for you,"

I say, really feeling sorry for the monotony of such an existence.

"Dull! well, yes. I suppose it was not very exciting," she says, "but there was nothing else to be done. I have no relations in England, and you know father had only one sister. She is a captain's wife in India, and she has eight children, so she couldn't have taken me. If it had not been for your kindness, I suppose I should have had to go out as a governess." (Here the grey eyes are turned on me with a very grateful look.) "And Miss Browne always said I was too young, and much too fond of going out for that."

I feel here as if I had really done a good action, though I cannot quite settle with myself in what way. I also picture to myself the feelings of a quiet respectable family at seeing the instructress of their children arrive surrounded by a happy family of animals. So I murmur, with perfect truth, that "the very idea is absurd," at which the grey eyes beam gratefully once more. A little pause, then a wistful peep into the garden.

"May I go out? What a lovely place! May London squares for evermore be banished! And may the dogs have the delight of a scamper? They did so hate being in the train. The guard let them come in the carriage with me at first. Then—would you believe it?—some ladies actually complained! I do think," goes on this young lady, who certainly has left her shyness behind her (if she ever had any), "there must be something wrong about people who object to dogs."

She regards me inquiringly here, and I hastily murmur—

"Yes, yes—of course."

"Ah, I knew you would not," she returns.

"Every nice person loves animals. One old lady in the train complained that Punch put his nose in her pocket, and tried to get her sandwiches. Punch" (regretfully) "has not quite such gentlemanly manners as Patsey. Still it was absurd to mind a trifle like that, it only showed his good taste if the sandwiches were nice ones. She must have been a horrid old woman," goes on this young lady, whose ideas as to the rights of property appear somewhat undefined.

Then before I can construct a speech which combines truth with politeness, she is at the door, and a clear ringing whistle rings through the house; such a whistle as I could not accomplish to save my life, and which the baker's boy could do no better. . . . The last I see of her before dinner is a sort of happy-family scamper, so to say. Girl in the middle, dogs jumping up on either side, wretched black kitten ambling unsteadily in the rear. I watch them for a minute or two, heave a deep sigh, and murmur, "Ten times worse than I thought." Then sigh once more, and call myself a savage old fogey. But the end of it is, that I walk off stealthily to the post-office, and despatch yet one more telegram before the day is done; and this one runs as follows:—

"Previous wire sent by mistake. Please destroy."

(To be concluded.)



"SOME EASTERN SWEETS."

By the Author of "We Wives."



N order to redeem the promise made in a recent number of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER (January, 1896), I have been culling from my ancient shagreen cookery-book some recipes for Indian sweets. They are all

old tried friends, and may be depended on. Any which take only foreign produce as a *pièce de résistance* (as, for example, pineapple snow) I have purposely omitted. Any which are very expensive to make I have also excluded.

It is a favourite maxim of mine, that if one can afford costly dishes, one can afford a professional cook to prepare them. The following recipes are plain, economical, and simple. They can be prepared by anyone of ordinary skill in the culinary department. As such they ought just to suit the many budding housewives who rejoice in this magazine.

Cocoanut Pudding.—As this hard, brown, string-covered nut can be as easily procured in the United Kingdom as in the tropics, we will begin with this recipe. For sixpence you can buy a large one. Break in good-sized pieces, and take off a thin brown skin cover-

ing the white lining. Grate and mix the flakes with three ounces of loaf-sugar and half an ounce of lemon dust. (The latter is only the yellow rind of a lemon finely grated and sifted.) Moisten with two well-beaten eggs and amalgamate the whole with some milk. Having lined a deep tin with puff paste (half a pound of butter or lard to three-quarters of a pound of flour makes sufficiently rich pastry for this), fill it with the cocoanut mixture. When baked a light brown, slip on to a dish and serve.

This might almost be called "cocoanut cheese-cake," as the tart should present an appearance like the lemon-cheese at a confectioner's.

Lecc'hée Cream.—Take one pint of fresh milk and bring to the boil. When bubbling sweeten with loaf-sugar and season with vanilla essence according to taste. Then add two well-beaten eggs. Now mix one tablespoonful of cornflour to a cream with a very little cold water. When quite smooth pour into the milk mixture, and stir thoroughly and carefully till it comes to the boil. Boil for one minute only. Have ready a glass dish with two tablespoonfuls of strawberry-jam layered at the bottom. When cooled a little, otherwise woe betide your cut crystal! pour the cream over it, and decorate the top with tiny ratafias or a pile of freshly-scraped

cocoanut. (Desiccated does just as well, I may remark *en passant*. A half-pound tin can be bought for fivepence at any store.) Serve cold.

Pears in Jelly.—We are all, perhaps, somewhat tired of the monotonous stewed fruits. How seldom one sees pears served in any way but swimming in a cochineal sea after being inhumanly butchered in twain! The same fruit coyly veiled in jelly! Ah, what a welcome sight!

Six stewing pears, two ounces of sugar, two ounces of butter, a pint of water, half an ounce of gelatine. That is what we need. First we soak our sheet of gelatine (much cheaper this than the packets of prepared stuff), and stew our pears until they are soft. Of course we have peeled them first! and sweetened the stew-water. When quite tender we turn them into the basin containing the gelatine in solution, and stir a little. Then very carefully, so as not to break the fruit, we lift each pear and place them side by side round a well-buttered mould, filling the centre with the liquid syrup. Don't look at the mixture if you are afraid of the result until it is "set." Then you will find a crimson jelly ready to be turned out. At regular intervals therein repose the luscious pears! Serve cold with a little whipped cream, and earn the gratitude of your friends!

Cocoanut Cake.—In order to have this cake in perfection one must have gathered the nut from beneath its feathery fronds oneself. But everyone does not live in India, and for us "at home" the same thing can be bought in a desiccated form. Not as good as the fresh, sweet, creamy, fragrant thing, but sufficiently good for all practical purposes.

We must begin by working four ounces of butter to a cream, and adding to it a quarter of a pound of sifted sugar, the yolks of two eggs, half a grated cocoanut, or three tablespoonfuls of the same in its desiccated form, and, lastly, half a pound of dried flour in which one teaspoonful of baking-powder has been incorporated. Keep to the order in which the ingredients are named. Mix all well together, and beat in enough milk to moisten sufficiently. Bake a light brown in a well-buttered tin.

Whilst this is cooking whisk the two egg-whites you have left over until stiff. This is best done with the blade of a knife on a soup-plate. Get someone else then to add slowly half a pound of icing-sugar, whilst you keep on whisking. This should be like a thick, smooth cream when spread on the cool cake. Wet the knife in water, and you will easily make quite a professional appearance *re* icing. When smooth sprinkle some cocoanut thickly on the wet surface, and put in the oven to set. Take care it does not colour, otherwise the snowy appearance of your cake will be destroyed.

Indian Fritters.—These are a pretty addition to a luncheon-table, when any visitor elects to arrive unexpectedly. They should be as light as dough-nuts, of a light-brown colour, and crisp as a cracker. Some bright-looking preserve should be selected as an accompaniment. Put three tablespoonfuls of flour into a bowl and pour on enough boiling

water to make a stiff paste. Stir carefully as you do so, and beat out any lumps with the back of a wooden spoon. Have ready the yolks of four eggs and the whites of two broken into a basin, but not whisked. When they are in the paste-mixture, you must beat and stir well together. Fry in boiling lard or butter (I need not repeat directions as to when fat is at a proper heat), dropping in a tablespoonful of batter at a time only. Each should look like a puffy ball.

Serve on a dish with a spoonful of peach or guava jelly between each fritter.

Plantain Fritters.—As this fruit can be bought in any city for a penny apiece, we need not go to the East to enjoy this delicacy. Strip the yellow, sausagey-looking thing from its thick outer skin, beginning to pare from tip to root. Divide exactly in two. Brush them slightly with yolk of an egg, dust with flour, and fry in boiling butter.

This must be eaten hot, and served piled up in a pyramid with sugar sifted over. My readers will find this as pleasant a way of preparing this luscious fruit as the complicated one recommended by Mrs. Beeton. Its simplicity will recommend it, I am sure, to many amateur cooks.

Lemon Honey.—Perhaps there is no word in our English language more calculated to excite a pleasing thirst than that of "lemon." In order to understand the longing aright one must have basked in an oriental city for a certain time. No wonder that Eastern philosophers have attributed wonderful powers to this much-esteemed fruit. Virgil spoke of it as an antidote to poison. Pliny, whilst rejecting it as unfit for human food on account of its acidity, lays stress on its being a useful medicine. Athenæus, a Latin writer, has left on record that two Arabians stung by adders felt

no ill-effects therefrom, because they partook freely of this species of citron. Anyhow, in India we like to keep a store of the following lemon honey, not because we are in the habit of being bitten by snakes, but because guests come uninvited into our bungalows and need feasting. This honey will keep for months if sealed up in stone jars, which is a great recommendation. After mixing together in an enamelled saucepan one pound of crushed loaf sugar, the yolks of four or six eggs, the whites of three, and three ounces of butter, we strain to it the juice of four lemons, and grate into it the rind of two.

Over a very slow fire we put the mixture, and stir quietly until it thickens and clears like honey. At once we take it off, put into bottles or gallipots, and seal down quickly. The above quantity only costs, on an average, one shilling, and numberless patty-pan cases can be filled from it.

With *Cream Toffee* this list of Eastern sweets must close. I do not want to trench on the domain of any cookery-book published.

Instead of using equal quantities of butter and sugar as in ordinary toffee, make this delicious sweetmeat with equal quantities of thick fresh cream and sugar. Necessity, perhaps, caused this change. As everyone knows, butter for the breakfast-table of an Anglo-Indian is painfully produced by shaking a glass bottle! Cream was so much simpler to get at, and some enterprising cook made toffee therewith. Result? Well, you just try it, and you will not need to be told how vastly inferior is the ordinary butter-scoth!

After making, pour the soft mass on to a well-buttered soup-plate, and leave to cool. Cut into dice, and put away in a tin or glass. It will keep well for many months, unless our boys get at it!

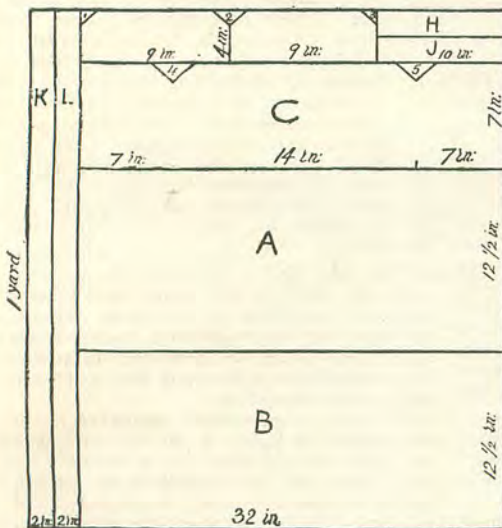


FIG 1.

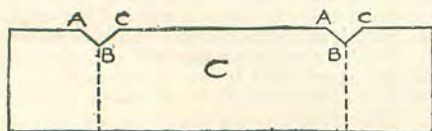


FIG 2.

HOW TO MAKE A BABY'S FROCK FROM A YARD OF STUFF.

THIS is a capital pattern, and easier to make than a similar design one sometimes sees, there being no troublesome little gussets under the arm.

One yard of 32-inch print is required, some neat "all over" pattern should be chosen. Cut it up according to Fig. 1, the bits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, are to be thrown away. The large pieces A, B, are for the skirt, run up the seams, and make a false hem of calico 2 inches deep; cut a 6-inch placket-hole in centre of back width, gather the waist to 27 inches.

The piece C is the bodice, which may be lined if desired; it needs a 1/2-inch hem up each side of the back, and the same at the waist. The sleeves, Fig. 3, are made by sewing the two sides E together, they are then fitted into the arm at A, B, C, Figs. 2 and 3, the sleeve forming the shoulder; make a false hem all round the neck with tape of sufficient width to allow of a draw-string, hem the edges of sleeves.

The long strips, H, J, K, L, must be sewn together, hemmed at each edge, and gathered on a piping-cord, to form a trimming for neck and sleeves; sew the skirt securely to the bodice, add a button and button-hole to centre of back, run a draw-string in neck and waist, and your work is complete.

"COUSIN LIL."

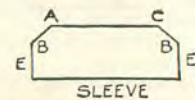


FIG 3.



FIG 4