

A girl who aims at being refined should remember that everything pertaining to her body as well as her mind should be clean and in order. Her mind should be kept pure by the cultivation of holy thoughts and all reading that is undefiled, and her body should be an index to it.

"A slovenly appearance cannot be said to be refined, and many girls err in that direction. However simple your dress is, let it be in

order—no braid unsewn, hooks and eyes lacking, buttons off, and pins placed as substitutes for any of these. Use your needle and cotton and mend a tear or unsewn braid as soon as you notice either. Do not have frayed edges to your skirts, and remember that your dresses should be as tidy inside as out.

"Great personal cleanliness is indicative of refinement. Brush your clothes, keep them clean, and do not wear soiled finery. Clean

collars or frills or cuffs are charming, whereas the reverse is anything but pleasant to see. A fresh blouse is very nice, and with care can be kept clean for some little time by the tidy girl, whereas her untidy careless sister, after a day's wearing of a like garment, does not look at all presentable.

"Ever your affectionate cousin,
"CLARA MORRIS."

[THE END.]

CAKE-DECORATING.

By LINA ORMAN COOPER, Author of "We Wives," etc.

No paper on cake-making and cake-baking can be considered complete until some directions with regard to icing the same are given. In the Summer Part I spoke about the former branch of this kind of confectionary. To-day I would tell how to beautify the home-made cakes we have prepared.

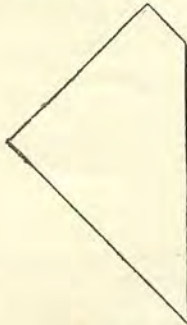


FIG. 1.

We all know what a professional air hangs over a well-iced erection. But there is no reason why amateurs should not be equally successful.

There are two kinds of icing, called respectively, soft and royal. For both of them we require proper icing sugar, carefully and patiently sifted through a wire sieve or piece of muslin. This initial operation must on no account be neglected or hurried over. On the perfect smoothness of the sugar much of our success will depend. Roughly speaking, it takes one pound of sugar to ice the top of a pound cake properly. It is impossible to say exactly, but at least that amount must be ready beside us.

If we desire to decorate our cake with soft icing, we put some of this sugar into a bowl, add to it the juice of a quarter of a lemon and then as much boiling water as is required to make it "mushy." If too much is added, we can thicken with the reserve we have in hand; so never put all your sugar at first into the bowl.

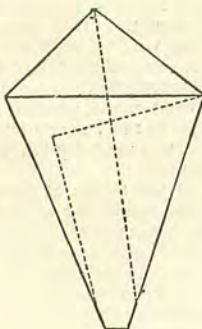


FIG. 2.

Take great care to beat this well; for thorough beating gives our icing that glossy and snowy look admired so much. When of a right consistency—something like cream—add whatever colouring is required. A squeeze of laundry blue ministers to its whiteness and is often necessary, though the lemon and beating may whiten it much. Sixpenny bottles of colouring liquids may be bought. If you prefer pink ice, a few drops of liquid carmine brings a blush to its cheek, or carmine mixed with yellow gives a salmon tinge, or bright green may be chosen. Whatever colour is selected must be added to the icing when the latter is liquid enough to run from the spoon. This soft mass can then be poured on to the cake, smoothed with a knife dipped in cold water, and set away to dry.

A variation of this icing is made with chocolate. For this we must put down three teaspoonfuls of grated chocolate to boil in a little water. It must be thoroughly smooth and melted before adding to the sugar. By this method we can regulate colour far better than by putting the dry powder with the dry sugar. It also ensures smoothness. A rule of thumb in this matter is about an ounce and a half of chocolate to three ounces of sugar. A



FIG. 3.

few drops of lemon-juice added to it helps to harden the same.

For royal icing no exact proportions can be given. Put one pound of well-rolled, finely-sifted sugar into the bowl and add some lemon-juice. Now pour right into it, without whisking, the whites of one or two eggs. Then, with the back of a wooden spoon incorporate together until all the sugar is converted into a quite stiff mass. Beat for at least a quarter of an hour if you want to have the icing really like satin.

When sufficiently stiff, sufficiently white, and sufficiently silvery, coat your cake over thickly and smoothly. Then come our last professional touches. We want to have stiff rosettes and crinkles and basket-work all over our cake. Or we want to put a name and date thereon. Well, for this part of the process confectioners use a kind of pump fitted with different sized nozzles. It costs about 12s. 6d. But we amateurs need not go to this expense unless we wish. A few sheets of stiff cooking paper—four can be bought for a penny—a case of different-sized noses, involving an outlay of a few pence more, and we can do all we wish.

Cut some paper, as per Fig. 1, with a blunt point and two sharp ones. Hold the blunt corner between your left finger and thumb and twist round until the two sharp points meet, and you have in your hand a conical-shaped bag (Fig. 2).

Insert one of your bought nozzles into the tiny opening at the tail, and you can manipulate your sugar at will. Rosettes are simply little dabs of icing forced into a lump.

Basket-work is represented with strands of sugar drawn from one point to another.

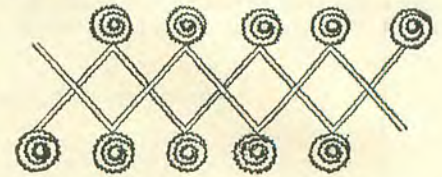


FIG. 4.

A row of waved icing top and bottom of this gives a nice finish, and the result would be as Fig. 5.

If the cake be covered with white icing, the roses may be pink and the trellis-work green, with a result infinitely pleasing to everyone. Or the icing can be chocolate with white basket and rosettes.

There is one very unprofessional method of icing which is nevertheless often successful and is very quickly done. For years I decorated my children's birthday cakes with it, to their satisfaction and delight. We lived in the country, so sometimes had to be satisfied with castor sugar. Beating up the whites of two eggs on a plate, with a pinch of salt, I used to add the sugar gradually until it no longer clung to the blade of my knife. Then I spread it smoothly over my cake, ornamenting it whilst wet with crystallised fruits—chopped cherries or rows of coloured sweeties. A few seconds in a cool oven "set" this perfectly, and the work was done. Of course, this way of icing was my own invention, like the white knights pudding, with a foundation of experience instead of blotting-paper.

Two things I must ask the printer to put in italics.

- (1) *Be sure your icing sugar is passed through a sieve.*
- (2) *Let your cakes be quite cold and very dry before attempting to decorate them, or dire will be the results.*

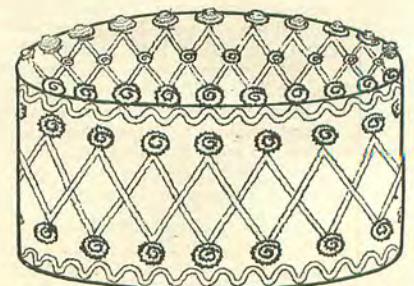


FIG. 5.