PIES AND TARTS.

By PHILLIS BROWN.

It girls, I imagine, like making pastry. Indeed in a girl's mind a cook is usually a person who makes pies. If we try to persuade a girl to practise cookery, and she isinclined to yield to our persuasion, the first thing she will do to show her willingness will be to offer to make some pies. On the whole I think she would not very sensibly things to look as well as to eat, and they exist as tangible proofs of the skill of the maker. Somehow a pie is not such a fleeting evanescent object as a stew or a soup. They are generally considered as a test while she they are accomplished facts, and in the course of a couple of hours their glory is a thing of the past; but pies remain (for a short time only). They are carried off in the jarring of the road, allowed to go cold, and the cook can if she likes pay them a visit and look at them and feast her eyes on the work of her hands.

We will therefore spend a little time walking over the methods to be adopted in making pastry; and first we have to consider our utensils and materials.

A good cook always collects together everything that she is likely to want before she begins to work. By this means she saves time. If she were to put her hands into the flour and then go away and fetch wood while she fetched a rolling-pin or a dish, she would be half as long again over her business as she needed to be. She is wise when she let her head save her if she is good at a little smartness and then collecting her utensils and ingredients and putting them in one place, so that they will be at hand when wanted.

In order to make pastry it is necessary to have a pastry board, a rolling pin, a flour dredger, a knife, some flour, salt, butter, or sweet dripping, water, or egg or two, a little sugar, and, if approved, some baking powder. There must be also a clean basin, some pie dishes, tartlet tins, baking sheets, and either meat, fruit, jam, or whatever else is intended to constitute the contents of the pie, and the accompaniment. With these contents, however, I have at present nothing to do. I shall confine myself entirely to the pastry.

It is, I suppose, scarcely necessary to say to young ladies that every one of the utensils used in making pastry must be scrupulously clean; that goes without saying, but must be watched, and that pastry should be made in a cool place.

When a marble slab is not to be had, a large slate, or even a smooth tile, is sometimes made to fill its place. Girls will find that their hands will be cooler if washed in hot water a few minutes before setting to work. The best biscuit flour is usually taken for making pastry, but if pies are wanted, however, it is worth while to use what is called Vienna flour, which is flour that has been passed through silken sieves in order to make it very fine. It is a good deal more expensive than biscuit flour, and it makes finer, lighter pastry. For ordinary purposes, however, the biscuit flour will be quite good enough.

As with Vienna flour, so with eggs. Eggs are not needed for ordinary pastry, and very good pies and tarts may be made without them, but to make a light pie and a few drops of lemon-juice improve pastry. They make it more elastic, more workable, and also make it look and taste richer. It would, however, be far better to leave out an egg altogether rather than to use one that was not quite sweet and good.

There is a great deal of difference of opinion about the usefulness of baking-cakes and pastry. For my own part, I am in favour of baking-powder for ordinary purposes. For one thing, its use is to be recommended on economical grounds. There is no need for shortening is needed when baking-powder is used. Also baking-powder makes pastry lighter, and consequently more digestible. It is barely possible that when baking-powder is used the pastry should be mixed quickly and baked as soon as possible after it is mixed.

There are two kinds of pastry in constant use amongst us: puff pastry, short pastry, suet crust for boiled puddings, and what is called hot-water paste for raised pies. Puff pastry is composed of the lightest and finest flour; it is the lightest and easiest, most difficult to make, and very indegustible. A good course of puff pastry would, I think, be enough to give an elephant dyspepsia. Nevertheless, it is very much liked, and I expect the girls would be disappointed if I did not describe how it should be made. There is one consideration that may encourage us in trying it, and that is that if we can make good puff paste we can make all other kinds of pastry. It will not do, however, for us to be discouraged if our first attempts in this line are not successful; practice will give skill in this direction.

It is always a great help to understand the idea of a thing as well as the method. The idea of puff pastry is to roll out the butter and the paste separate, so that the pastry shall form a kind of sandwich, in which very thin light layers of paste shall be separated from each other by layers of butter, and the lighter and thinner these layers can be made the better the puff paste is. A very clever cook, once said that, puff paste to be perfect must consist of eighty-four thin films of paste, alternated with eighty-three of butter. I do not think there are many cooks who could achieve this, but at any rate girls will understand that is the ideal, and the nearer they can approach to it the more successful they will be.

It is for this reason that making these films perfect and separate that the pastry is cooled between the "turns," If the paste were to be sticky and the butter hot, the films could not be kept distinct. Between the rollings or turns puff paste is put away on ice or in a cool place, that the layers may become firm and not mix together in a mass. In ordinary weather it is put in a earthenware dish, and the pastry can be put in a cool larder for half an hour. But in summer time it is very desirable that ice should be used. Now as to the actual method to be adopted. Suppose we wished to make a quantity of puff paste sufficient for a small pie, we should take a quarter of a pound of flour which has been sifted and is thoroughly dry, a small pinch of salt, the yolks of one egg, a quarter of a pound of butter which has been squeezed in a cloth to free it from moisture, and six or eight drops of lemon-juice. We would put the dry ingredients into the pastry board or slab, and mix the salt with it, make a little well in the centre, and put into it the egg yolk and lemon-juice. We now have two portions of the right material to put into the egg yolk, and add very gradually as much water as is required to mix the whole, till the paste is of the consistency of the butter. When this point is reached, the slab should be worked and kneaded on the slab till it feels smooth, soft, and elastic, when it may be left untouched for a minute or two.

The next thing to do is to flour the slab lightly, put the paste upon it, flour this also, and roll it gently till it is large enough to hold the squeezed butter. If too much flour is used the pastry will be spoilt. We then place the butter in the centre of the paste, and fold the four sides over to cover it completely. We make the edges meet by pressing them together, and put the paste thus prepared upon ice or in a cool place for about ten minutes. We now roll it till it is about the third of an inch thick, and in doing this the pastry must be carefully examined, and any place that seems to break through the paste in any direction. Also we must remember to have the paste straight before us, and to roll it straight, otherwise the folds will be pinched, and when that is done we gather the paste into three equal parts, flatten it lightly with the rolling-pin again, then turn it round so that we have the rough edges towards us, turn it again, fold it, and put it away for a quarter of an hour, and repeat until it has had seven turns or rolls, and been put upon ice three times, or after every other turn. When the paste has been given we again leave it in a cold place for a few minutes, roll it till it is a quarter of an inch thick, and it is ready for use.

Pastry thus made will rise to five times its original height.

When a girl has once learnt to make puff pastry well she may vary her method a little, without doing much harm; that is to say, she may use rather less butter, or rather more flour, or in cold weather she may shorten it for flaky pastry. This will enable her to decide how far she may depart from the regulated routine. It will be obvious that the method I have described is rather a complicated one. It is, however, if other cooking is being done at the time, for nothing can be easier than to put the pastry away, proceed with other work, then at the right time fetch it out, give it a roll, put it away again, and repeat until it is finished.

I have known cooks make very good flaky pastry without putting it to cool at all. They simply made the paste, rolled it out, divided the butter into equal portions, spread one portion upon the paste as they would spread butter upon bread, folded the paste over, and rolled it; then buttered, floured, and rolled it again until the requisite quantity of butter had been used. If there were time to go again they would begin to fatigue the tenuity of doing so, but otherwise they would leave it.

It will be understood that puff paste is used for the decoration pastry of all kinds of pies, tarts, patties, and vol-au-vents. There is, however, an easier way of making superior pastry which answers excellently for pies and tarts, and the following are the directions for making it. Take half a pound of flour, six ounces of butter, a pinch of salt, six drops of lemon-juice, and the yolk of an egg. Prepare the ingredients as for true puff paste; then if thick, squeeze the butter to free it from moisture, and be sure that the flour is dry and sifted. Chop the butter in the flour with a knife;
THE QUEEN O' THE MAY.

then pile the flour on the board; make a well in the centre, and put into it the salt, egg, yolk, and lemon-juice. Add the water gradually, and mix it lightly with the fingers, to make a light not over stiff paste. Flour the rolling-pin and the board to prevent the pastry sticking, but do not put too much flour in, or the pastry will be spoilt. Roll it well three times, and after each roll fold it in two and turn it with the rough edges to the front. If it makes a crackling sound as it is being rolled it is a sign that it is good. If liked, this pastry may be made with half a pound of flour, four ounces of butter, half a teaspoonful of baking-powder, and dripping may be used instead of butter.

Short paste is used more than puff paste; it is suitable for fruit pies and tarts. The idea with it is to rub the shortening into the flour before making up the paste. Short paste is more wholesome and much more easily made than puff paste. It may be made to be most delicious if only pains, good ingredients, and a light cool hand are brought to the work. I am afraid, however, that space will not permit me to speak of it to-day; so I will reserve it, as well as met pastes, and hot-water paste for the raised pies which are so popular at this time of the year, till our next lesson.

the sun was slowly rising. She was so breathless and excited that she knew not that her hastily-tied hat and handkerchief fell off by the way and remained on the mossy ground. But even the sudden blaze of light that dispersed the shadows she would scarcely have been conscious of the day; but as she emerged from the wood, the sky, mountains, trees, and meads were glowing beneath the golden and royally scattered gifts of the monarch of the morning.

Daylight enabled her to distinguish a crowd of people down below round about the pit that she had first seen when her grandfather drove her home and Meredith ran down to look at her some eight years before. Why did the scene arise to her memory at that moment? She had heard of explosions in the mines, but although there had been many serious
PIES AND TARTS.

SHORT PASTE, SUET PASTE, AND RAISED PIES.

Raid in our last lesson that the idea in the crust is to have the butter and paste separate, so that the paste shall be made up of a number of layers, divided from each other by layers of butter. In short-paste, on the other hand, the idea is for the butter to be mixed with the flour by kneading, not rolling. Indeed, one great secret in making short crust is to roll it as little as possible.

After the butter and flour have been moistened with water, the paste should be rolled once only to make it smooth and of a good shape.

Short-paste is much more wholesome than puff-paste. It is used chiefly for fruit pies and tarts.

In very rich pastes, equal quantities of butter and flour would be used. Superior crust might, however, be made with less than half the weight of butter. Any but the very best oil or good ecclesiastical pastry may be made with a smaller proportion of butter and a little baking-powder. Good plain pastry may be made with, say, 4oz. of butter and 4 of flour, as obtained from joints, or produced by rendering down ox or other kinds of soft beef fat.

A great many people have a strong objection to pastry made with dripping. I cannot understand the reason they think it so bad. The older children had each a tailor's egg, made after Kate's directions, though the dress of the doll was varied in each case, and contained two or three ideas of ornamentation by stitching, painting in sepia, or pencil drawing, which latter was done before boiling, so that the dressing was well set. Each child added the date and initials of the recipient.

For one of the young children there was a coloured egg, with the name and date left white by means of greasing the letters, and for another a plain, hard-boiled one, ornamented after boiling by gumming on little coloured pictures. Each had also an egg full of sweets, which was managed by taking an empty shell, with the broken edge as little jagged as possible, washing it quite clean, and then filling it with a little piece of coloured muslin just inside the edge of the shell; the sweets were next put in, and the muslin drawn together by a narrow piece of ribbon run through the loop of ribbon from end to end to form a handle. Here is a finished one, not exactly true to nature, being too pointed, but near enough in all practical purposes, I trust; for if you round the ends more, it is so difficult to make them meet properly.

It is very pretty; but, Kate, how do you manage to cut an oval out of a circle so that it will fit exactly?

That is because the fifth is overlapped by the opposite one, as for the opening, read the inscription on the edges of the divisions—

"Press the poles and you will see what Easter hath in store for thee."

read Kate; and gently squeezing the two ends of the egg together one side came open, displaying a prettily-dressed doll lyinginside.

"One more idea," said Kate, "and I have done. You observe this empty egg-shell, a relic of my breakfast this morning. Allow me to call your particular attention to the present way of a really thick shell the small end of the egg, and carefully did not crack it down the sides more than I could help. At the close of this meeting we shall no once, and in an hour or two for cut the doll, from which I shall proceed to cut the head and legs. The head (with as much neck as the shape of my victim will allow) may be adorned with a sailor's hat, which can easily make with paper or cardboard, and a scrap of ribbon, and round the neck will be a large sallow's collar. Thus equipped, the doll is a perfect one for an egg-box, the neck, if there is any, going into the hole of the egg to steady the lid. The legs must be cut short and painted to represent boots. If they are too attenuated-looking they can be much improved by dipping in melted wax till they are of an elegant shape. They must then be glued on, or if that failed, was, that will be sufficient to fasten them."

After a little more talk the girls agreed on what should be attempted in the way of providing pies and the success was decided when on the morning of Easter Day each member of the family found quite a brilliant display upon their plate.

For whether there was a large cardboard egg, made according to Kate's plan, containing cotton, thimble, needles, and pins; also a real hard-boiled ornamented with water-colours, with primroses, violets, and other spring flowers. This was intended to be eaten, but was declared to be much too pretty for that purpose.

The older children had each a tailor's egg, made after Kate's directions, though the dress of the doll was varied in each case, and contained two or three ideas of ornamentation by stitching, painting in sepia, or pencil drawing, which latter was done before boiling, so that the dressing was well set. Each child added the date and initials of the recipient.

For one of the young children there was a coloured egg with the name and date left

The excellence of pastry depends very much upon its being properly raised. I would advise to use any pastry that ever was mixed would be spoilt if the oven was not exactly right. If an oven is not hot enough the pastry will sink away from the edges of the plate.

If the oven is too hot the pastry will be burnt or will stiffen without rising. The surest way of testing the heat of the oven is to bake a small piece of pastry before you put your plate into it. Another way is to sprinkle a little flour upon the oven shelf. If it turn a bright brown in a few seconds the oven is hot enough. If it turns black the oven is too hot..."
PIES AND TARTS.

if it remains pale in colour the oven is too slow.

Pastry should be put in the hot part of the oven for the first five minutes, after which it should be removed to a cooler part that it may be cooked through. Large pies containing fruit or meat must be thoroughly cooked, should have a sheet of paper placed over them as soon as the pastry has risen, to prevent their air-drying a dark brown colour before the centre is well cooked.

Pastry which is to be boiled is lighter when made with meat than it is when butter, lard, or dripping is used. Beef suet is generally used for this purpose, but mutton is more wholesome and can be chopped the more easily of the two. With one pound of flour, four, six, eight, or ten ounces of suet may be taken, according to the depth of richness required. Very good suet crust may be made with six ounces of suet, one teaspoonful of baking powder, a pinch of salt, and a pound of flour. The suet should be stewed until it is quite soft and then added gradually. To make a very stiff paste, the pastry should be rolled out once and it is ready for use.

A raised pie baked without either diastase or pattypanns, is very interesting work, and like a good many other things it is very mysterious until we know very well what we do. I will try to describe the method of making these pies very clearly. If there are any girls who feel inclined to follow the instructions given, and make the attempt, I would advise them to begin by making small pies, then when they have become quite proficient in the art, they may try their hands upon large ones.

Raised pies may be made with every kind of meat, game, or poultry, provided only that whatever is used is free from bone. If it must be remembered, therefore, that all meat must be boned before it is used for this purpose. The meat also must be pleasantly seasoned, and the gravy must be reduced until it will form a stiff jelly when cold. This strong gravy is put in after the pie has been taken from the oven, and it should, if possible, be made the day before it is wanted.

We will say that we wish to make either one moderate sized pie, or two small ones. Take one pound of lean pork, one pound of flour, a quarter of a pound of lard, one pint of cold water, six small stalks of celery, one egg, and a little pepper and salt. Weigh the flour and put it into a bowl with a little salt; put the lard and cold water into a saucepan, and set it on the fire until it is boiling hot. Pour the boiling liquor into the flour, and mix it with a wooden spoon till it is a firm smooth paste. It cannot, of course, be mixed with the fingers in the first instance, because it will be too hot.

Mix the sage leaves with a little pepper and salt. When the paste and lard are boiling hot, put in the celery, cut into small meat pieces, and set them aside till wanted. As soon as the paste is made we must be provided with quantities of pastry, because the pie is to be moulded while the paste is warm and soft. As it gets cold it will become hard, and then we cannot shape it as we wish. First make four leaves of the quantity of paste (that is if we are going to make one moderate sized pie), put it on a plate, and set it over a saucepan of hot water to keep it soft; it is necessary for the paste to be soft. We then take the remainder of the paste, form it with both hands to an oval lump, and lay it on the table. We keep pressing the centre of the lump with the right hand to make it hollow; we put the thumb of the right hand inside the hole thus formed, whilst keeping the four fingers outside it, and with the help of the left hand we shape the round and round till we have a firm thin wall to the pie with a solid foundation. We shall find that the walls will show a tendency to grow wider than the bottom, and incline outwards. This cannot be allowed, they must incline inwardly, and so if they get wider they must be thinned and pressed outwards, just as children double over a part of a seam when they are in danger of "pucking" it. When we are sure that in our work there will be no fear of our thus "puckering" our pork pie, and so we shall not need to fold it over, but while we are learning we must do our best, and leave the rest.

Another mistake into which we shall be likely to fall will be that of making our walls or sides thinner in some places than in others. This also must not be allowed. When the pie is filled and is in the oven, these thin places will, if left, burst through, and the pie will be spoilt. Care must be taken, therefore, to make the walls of an even thickness all round, and if any portion should inadvertently become thin and weak we must either double over a part of it and make it thick again, or in the former case, or lay a little patch of pastry inside it to strengthen it.

Girls will see now how necessary it is to be quick in this business. The pie is set in the oven when we begin to work upon it, but every minute it is getting harder. If it were to get quite hard we should have to put it on a plate over hot water and soften it again, and then it would not be so good as when freshly made.

When the pie is shaped we fill it to within half an inch of the top with the pieces of meat, first dipping each one into cold water and afterwards rolling it in the seasoning which was mixed ready for us a little while ago on the plate. We then roll out the piece of paste which was set aside for the cover of the proper shape and size, and lay it over the meat; egg the edges, and press them securely together, and make a hole in the centre of the pie through which the gravy can be poured when the pie is baked. All that now remains to be done is to ornament our work, brush it all over with beaten egg, and bake it in a moderate oven, and so pour the gravy into it. The ornamentation must be left to taste. The pie will look very pretty if leaves of pastry are laid all round the sides, and if the rim at the top is notched finely and evenly with scissors. I once saw a pie made to look very pretty by placing the artist called Maigrant's, some strips of wheatears, planks of chestnuts, and strips of pasty, rolled up, then cut finely at one end to make them look something like wheatears) at regular intervals, with leaves of pastry between. Of course these ornaments had to be fastened firmly to the pie with white of egg.

Raised pies must be baked in a moderate oven, because they are soft, and have to be cooked throughout. A pie such as I have described never need to bake from two to three hours; a large pie would require from four to five hours. Sometimes these raised pies are baked on a bed, then the bottom is rolled and laid in the tin; the sides are put on separately, the edges being fastened together with white of egg; and the lid is laid on and fastened down in the same way. These would be not, however, to be found in every kitchen, and it is a very good thing when we are able to dispense with this. Girls who wish to become adept in the art of making pastry must always remember that the most perfect theories are of little use without practice. Practice will enable us to make good pastry. We may measure quantities and observe rules with the utmost precision, but until we have had practice we shall never be truly experts, and when we are marching bravely forward with our pies in our hands.

PHILLIS BROWNE.

A GOOD DAUGHTER.—There are other ministers of love more conspicuous than she, but none in whom a gentler, lovelier spirit dwells, and none to whom the heart's warmest gratitude more joyfully respond. She is the steady light of her father's house. Her ideal is indissolubly connected with that of his Fireside. She is the morning sunlight and evening star of her parents. Her grace, vivacity, and tenderness of her sex have their place in the mighty sway she holds over them. But that one goodness can only come from the giver and Source of all good, and in answer to prayer and watchfulness.

BURIED RIVERS.

1. The guardians think the tutor well deserves it.
2. I will procure both a messenger and guide for you.
3. Don't you think Flo uses too much glue?
4. The gum-arabie Amy bought is bad.
5. There is an account of that case in every daily paper.
6. You must tell Ross to urge Harry on.

A MOMENTOUS QUESTION.

"Clara, I love thee alone,
Thus sighed the tender youth—"
"Oh, hear me, then, my passion own,
With trembling lips and earnest tone:
I swear I speak the truth."
He paused—a blush of emotion he avoids;
She let him draw her near;
"Spare me for emotion could she speak,
Yet did she ask, in accents meek,
"How much have you a year?"

SUDDEN resolutions, like the sudden rise of the mercury in the barometre, indicate little else than the changeableness of the weather—

Guesses at Truth.

THE wisest habit of all is the habit of care in the formation of good habits.—LynCH.

Our minds are like ill-hung vehicles; when they have little to carry they raise a prodigious catter; when heavily laden, they neither creep nor rumble.

ANSWER TO DOUCE ACROSTIC (p. 366).

H A D S T R O N G
L U S A R
L A C K A N A
N O D T O D
D A V

ANSWERS TO BURTON'S TOWIES (p. 366).