figure she encountered afforded scope for this talent. She had her collections of shells and of botanical and entomological specimens, to which she was always adding. Her brother and sisters were ignoramuses and numskulls, but Jane, although she always made light of what desultory information she had acquired, and thirsted for deeper and more thorough knowledge. She was normally contented and as cheerful as any of us; when she did fret it was largely in response to Aunt Maria’s fretting on her account. For unfortunately Aunt Maria could not witness Jane’s infirmities without yielding to the impression that somebody was to blame for them. Either she herself had neglected precautions which would have prevented the mischief, or Jane had been, or was at the present moment, guilty of some rashness, the effect of which formed the root of her malady. Aunt Maria worried both herself and Jane on this head, until many a time Jane would be driven to cry out, “Oh, if Aunt Maria would only let me alone! If she could but be brought to look to first causes! If she would acknowledge practically that whatever laws may or may not be broken, it is really God’s will that some of us should be crooked and some of us straight, some of us strong and some of us weak. Everything would be so much easier to bear if she would see it in that light.” This struggle did not interfere with the strong regard which existed between Aunt Maria and Jane; indeed, I believe Jane’s vexation was allayed by the sense that she could not satisfy Aunt Marin. There was a still deeper attachment between father and Jane, expressed in the quietest manner.

I was Caroline, the youngest, “Caro-line” only to father and Aunt Marin, “Car” to Tom, Sally and Jane, to Cousin Perry and to our particular friends among the young officers. They all said I was like both Sally and Tom. I was a big girl for my years, as Sally was for hers, and I had her hair and complexion, but I had Tom’s and my father’s dark grey eyes, the tiniest of all, had Tom’s mouth and teeth—smaller because I was a girl. I had the, the, the pimple in his cheek,

which, to be sure, was rather girlish in a boy. (He was very much ashamed of it and would pull out his chubby cheeks to try to hide it.) I was healthy and hardy, for which I was even then thankful, though Aunt Maria was tempted to grudge the surplus breath which I could not transfer to Jane, and to say it made me a tomboy. I do not think it was that, so much as the fact that Sally’s being grown up, as she fondly imagined, and Jane being hors de combat and living in a world of her own—made up of books and drawing-copies and what Tom called her “logical specimens,” which I had not the wit and taste to enter, I was thrown back for companionship, especially in play hours, on Tom and the middles nearest my age. After all, though they helped me to tear my frocks, dirty my hands, and make and thin Miss Marple called in a furrow ’of my hair, and though they taught me to play “Round” and “Fives” and other games, not usually included in a girl’s education, I cannot recall that they taught me anything worse.

(To be continued.)

ANGELS’ FOOD.

By Dora de Blaquière.

CAKE—or, perhaps, it would be better called, the sweetmeat—known to-day under the name of “angels’ food,” is by no means of modern origin. Indeed, the basis of the mixture may be found as far back as the days of Queen Elizabeth, when a very light, porous kind of sweetmeat was made, in a rather more clumsy mode of manufacture, under the name of “angelic sweetmeat.” The foundation of all “angels’ food” is the same, the chief distinction between them consisting in the number of eggs used, which varies from eight to one dozen. Nor need the housekeeper, who is anxious to make the attempt to manufacture “angel cake” of any kind, be deterred by the seeming expense, for there are plenty of good eggs to be obtained, hailing from the “foreign parts” from Normandy, Brittany, or Holland—at the comparatively small price of thirteen a shilling, or in the summer time even less.

The first recipe I shall give is quite a new one, and has come from America; it is called “angels’ food.” It is a cup of powdered (castor) sugar; 1 cupful of flour; 1 teaspoonful of cream of tartar; the whites of ten eggs beaten to a stiff froth. The Newfoundland-American recipe I can find differs but little from it, and is as follows:—The whites of eleven eggs which have been kept in a very cool place, or upon ice, before they are used; one tablespoon and a half of castor sugar; three-fourths of a tablespoon of flour; one level teaspoonful of cream of tartar, and one teaspoonful of flavouring—almond, lemon, or vanilla, whichever is preferred—lemon being the best, I think, of all.

The following instructions for making should be strictly followed:—The ingredients should be all carefully gathered together before their blending, that they may be all to hand conveniently. Mix the cream of tartar and the flour together and sift the mixture several times, adding the eggs white at the last. Beat the eggs whites only to a very stiff froth, and add the sugar to it very quickly and quietly; then, when these are well mixed, put in the sifted flour in the room, and work it in with your fingers and being careful to avoid any lumps of either. One of the secrets of making “angel cake” is the method of mixing it. You do not exactly either beat it or stir it, but you lift it up and down with your fork from the bottom of the tin; and if the first cake should turn out either tough or sticky, you will know that your mixing has been too violent, and with your next you must be more gentle. Put your cake into a clean, bright oven, and some good authorities will tell you on no account to butter it; the oven should be a cool one, or, at least very moderate, and you may bake for forty-five minutes. When it is done, you will see the oven-door open and allowing it to remain for a time, and then taking it out and standing it upon the table to cool off. Before putting it into the oven you should sprinkle the top lightly with powdered sugar, but not so much sugar should be used as would make the cake fall in baking it.

Amongst the varieties of angels’ food which are indulged in here in America, are “angel surprise cake,” “almost angel cake,” “angel custard,” and angels’ cake, all of which have peaches, bananas, and pineapples. The first named “surprise cake” is made with a freshly-made angel’s cake, which for this purpose should be baked in a round tin, and left in the tin until it is quite cold. When turned out, the first thing to do is to cut off the top from the cake, about half an inch thick, then take a sharp knife and cut round the inside of the cake, about half an inch from the crust, or the outer wall of the cake, and so take out the soft white centre. Then to whip a pint of fresh cream into a stiff froth and flavour with vanilla or lemon; pour into the prepared cake and smooth it over the top so that you can replace the lid, and make it look as if it were quite undisturbed. This, of course, constitutes the “surprise” when people add candied fruit or almonds to the cream.

“Almond angel cake” is also a delicious confection made in much the same manner as the preceding, except that the cake is cut in layers, and the whipped cream is mixed with half a pound of almonds, blanched, and cut in small pieces. The cream is then put in between the layers, and the top cut off, so as to allow the cream to be the top layer; and some of the almonds, cut into long thin pieces, are stuck in it; so as to make it look “porcupine.” “Angel custards” are made in rather a different manner, for the angel batter must be baked in muffin rings, and, as usual, the cakes with baked must be left to get perfectly cold before being turned out. Then the top must be cut off each cake, and some of the inside taken off, which you must replace with a custard, which you may make as rich, or as simple, as you please. The following is a cheap and good recipe for a custard, which you may use with angel cake, or in any other way. Take the yolks of two eggs, a tumbler of milk, and four lumps of sugar. Summer till thick, stirring the mixture carefully to prevent curdling, and, in a few drops of vanilla flavouring, and pour into a clean jug. Stir till cold.

The last preparation of “angel fruit cake” until the last. They are nearly all made in the same way, namely, the angel batter, instead of being baked in only one cake,
is baked in layers in the small round tins to be purchased at any tinsmith's, made for that purpose. They must not be very brown nor burnt. The lower layer of all must be spread with whipped, sweetened, and flavoured cream, and then you should cover this with a layer of bananas, peeled, and thinly sliced. Then put on another layer of cake, and repeat the addition of cream, and the sliced bananas. There are generally three layers of cake used, the top layer being completely covered up with the whipped cream.

Angels' food cakes are made in the same manner, and both can be made of the preserved or canned fruits instead of the fresh, and so are suitable for winter as well as for summer use.

And no account of angels' food would be quite complete unless it were supplemented by a mention and a recipe for "angel water," called in French Eau d'Angle. This is of very ancient use in England, and is often spoken of during the time of the plague. It was also called "Portugal water," and was in great repute at one time for its healing properties. Simple "angel water" is made of the flowering tops of the myrtle only, distilled with water; but there are three or four kinds of aromatic waters, under the same name, that contain many more ingredients, and are known under the various names of "distilled musk" and "boiled angel water." In a very old cookery-book in my possession there are at least half a dozen recipes for "angel water." A simple one, that could be made at home, was—1 pint of orange-flower water, 1 pint of rose-water, and 1 pint of "boiled angel-water." Or, according to these, put 1 ounce of essence of musk, and 1 ounce of essence of ambergris; shake the whole together. This recipe is marked "to be made in small quantities only, soon spoiled, either by heat or cold."

I find a recipe for distilled "angel water" is made thus:—Gun benzoin (crushed small), 4 ounces; liquid starch, 2 ounces; cloves (bruised), 4 ounces; Calamus aromaticus (bruised), 4 ounces; cinnamon (bruised), 4 ounces; coriander-seed (bruised), 1 drachm; water, 7 pints; distil 1 gallon.

We have left off the home manufacture of all these fragrant waters, which used to form a great part of the duties of our ancestresses. The "still-room maid" retains her name, but has other duties to perform, and the recipes are shut up in modest and unused books. But I am sure much of the beauty of our lives went out with these old evocations and these delightful names. In order to regain something we lost we shall have to make our tastes more simple, and go back to that almost forgotten love of the country, its quiet and peace, away from the hurried and unrestful life of the great city.

INTRODUCTION.

"Dumb jewels often in their silent kind
More than quick words do move a woman's mind."—Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Or the many exquisite things nature turns out from her laboratories, precious stones carry away the path both for beauty and fascination.

The mystery of their origin, the peculiarities of their native homes, their special characteristics, their medicinal qualities, their rarity and great value, the romances and tragedies in which they have played conspicuous parts, together with their marked influence on the lives of individuals and nations intensify our interest in them and sharpen our curiosity concerning them.

Beautiful and wonderful specimens as they are of nature's handiwork, they do not as a rule shine in all their splendour until they have passed through the hands of man; but this we shall see for ourselves as we follow each gem from its ancient home until, in its perfection, it adds fresh grace and beauty to the persons of the rich and the great.

All through the ages the method adopted by nature to form and perfect these gems has been enveloped in mystery, and, notwithstanding the intellect and knowledge which have been brought to bear upon this subject by successive generations, nature still manages to baffie us, and she has evidently no intention of gratifying our curiosity as to her process of manufacture.

One or two facts, however, the genius of man has wrested from her, for example, that she carries on her work in a peculiar class of rock and that the materials the she uses are quite of a common kind such as carbon, alumina, clay, and silica, with which we are all acquainted. A French scientist, Mons. Babinet, noting this fact, says, "It would seem as though the mighty creative and organising Power had chosen to manifest its omnipotence by producing the most valuable substances from the most ordinary elements."

But, when we come to the detail of nature's work, we are brought to a standstill, for she has not yet informed us how she brought together the elements of the stones, nor how she solidified the liquid or vaporous matters, for they could not have amalgamated in a solid state, nor even in a powdered form. Scientists believe that she employed one of three means—volcanic heat and pressure, the aid of foreign material to dissolve the solution, or the slow decomposition of vegetable matter, but which they cannot decide. Nor do we know how long she takes to form and complete these gems.

One thing, however, is quite evident, viz., that no workshop on the earth's surface has ever produced such treasures as the laboratories beneath it.

Pliny said "that in gems we have all the majesty of nature gathered in a small compass, and that in no other of her works has nature produced anything so admirable." Yet considering her boundless wealth of material and working power, it is surprising how small a number of precious stones have found their way into the world. Of these there may be many waiting and in readiness to be discovered, either by the skill of man, or by the freaks of their "Mother Nature," for her method of dealing with them is often curious. She produces them with the utmost care, sparing neither skill nor time to render them the most perfect of her treasures, and, when at length there is nothing more to desire, she wraps them round with quite common garments, which hide from view their exquisite form and colour, and with scent cover up their career.

Not till the hand of man has touched them, and with skill removed their coverings do they stand forth in the light pure, transparent, splendid, and with all her many graces.

The object in writing these articles on precious stones is to introduce the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER to their "habitats" or native homes, whether in mountain, rock, sea, or river, and to bring before them their characteristics and influence, and lastly to gather up the histories, which are often stronger than fiction.

The study is one of fascinating interest, and could we trace the individual career of some gems we should understand many an enigma in the history of nations, and gain a deeper insight into the mysteries of the human heart.

Not only have precious stones been favourites and symbols of wealth and of wealth studied with passionate devotion by men of science, and Mons. Babinet says that "the study of gems, which may seem frivolous when looked upon as mere ornaments, appears in another light when considered with regard to important questions of trade, and as connected with the two sciences of minerals and optics."

It would be of great interest if we were only to study under what conditions of soil, climate, and labour nature forms them; indeed, those who bestow upon precious stones the attention they do will be greatly enabled to acquire some knowledge of the geography, mineralogy, physics (natural objects) and chemistry of the countries which produce them.

It seems to us that bringing before us the treasures of Nature and the exercise of the genius of man upon them must be a healthy and interesting study, and one which lifts the mind above the petty cares of daily life.

In the study of precious stones, our thoughts go at once to the diamond as the king of them all, and as the most valuable; and yet this is not exactly correct, for the ruby has ten times the intrinsic worth of the diamond. But I do not mean that we should be preoccupied by the diamond, but rather choose the pearl as being specially the ornament of unmarried girls, for it is of all gems the most fitted to represent purity, grace of form, and exceeding worth.

CHAPTER I.

THE PEARL.

"As the rain from the sky
Which turns into a river, as it falls in the sea."—Thomas Moore.

"Ocean's gem the purest of nature's work."—Duyfken.

Pearls are the only gems that derive nothing from art, but in a natural attempt to improve them or increase their worth often turns out a complete failure.

Unlike other members of the aristocratic family of gems and precious stones, they are, as a rule, perfect in their native condition both