



CONDUCTED BY LAURA WILLIS LATHROP.

THE TABLE.—FASHION'S FREAKS IN FURNISHING.—FRUITS.—FLOWERS.

THE fickleness of fashion is no where more apparent than in the appointments of the table. Casters which have long held a central position have been condemned to an ignominious exile, being superseded by individual pepper and salts, by glass jugs for oil and vinegar, in quaint designs and in all shades of coloring, while dainty mustard pots are found in every style that the freaks of fancy have been able to suggest. For large dinner parties or ceremonious meals of any description, the latter three, with bread plate and butter dish, are placed upon the sideboard to be served by the waiters when required. The larger-sized napkins are used for both dinner and luncheon, while the smaller ones do service for breakfast and tea. The use of napkin rings is no longer considered a necessity, but altogether *passé*, the same napkin appearing but once, when it is relegated to the laundry prior to an immaculate re-appearance. A happy thought suggested the inauguration of "carver's cloths" placed under meat platters, as a protection to the cloth against accidental splatterings during the process of carving. They are made of crash or linen, fringed and embroidered. A very appropriate design for one is found in illustration No. M 45, page 26, May number, INGALLS' HOME MAGAZINE. Full directions for ordering are found on page 24 of the same number, and by consulting the catalogue advertised on same page you will note that the material can be obtained, ready stamped for the skill of the embroiderer, at very low rates. The design is traced in simple outline stitch, and we have seen it beautifully done by the busy fingers of very youthful workers. The near approach of Christmas time is suggestive of opportunities.

INDIVIDUAL PLATES for vegetables are no longer considered good form. This restriction, however, does not apply to salads, which are still served separately. The beautiful

Holbein cloths or tinted napery are still in vogue for breakfast, luncheon, or tea tables, but none save purest white are approved for dinner. Both the latter and the tinted fabrics may be found in devices to match almost any style of spread that fancy may devise, and in grades to suit the purse of any one, from the person of limited means up to that of the most wildly extravagant votary of fashion. The dainty viands which constitute the fashionable luncheon come decked in dainty ribbons.

"The bouillon and the cheese,
Rolls and straws, if you please,
Come flaunting in scarlet and gold;
While sandwich in blue,
Or pink, 'old' or 'new,'
A mysterious savor enfold."

The whole reminds you of a bright bevy of school-girls bedecked for a picnic.

CREAMS come frozen in boxes, and in innumerable designs. A pretty conceit is the decoration of these boxes with paper flowers in harmony or with the natural ones which adorn the table.

FRUITS, like peaches, pears, grapes, etc., are still served in their natural state, resting on a bed of natural foliage or dainty greenery in their receptacle of glass, majolica or gilded wicker, as the case may be. Fruit ices are as popular as ever.

WHITE FLOWERS combined with green are in high favor for table decoration, although any innovation on popular forms is greeted with favor, providing that it is in good taste. Ladies of established social position vie with one another in the adoption of novelties.

Christmas Thoughts and Christmas Dishes.

"How many things by season seasoned are to their right praise and true perfection."

What a world of consolation is embodied

in this fragment of fugitive verse for the busy house-mother who, in anticipation of the annual festival, hurries hither and thither in the preparation of the "Christmas goodies." Now tucking in the delicious plums for expectant fingers to "pull out," *à la* Jack Horner, now making ready the festive turkey or the savory goose which is to grace the Christmas board—herself frying to a nicety of perfection the crisp crullers or compounding the toothsome cookies which are to satiate the rapacious appetite of the juvenile portion of the "goodlie companie" who are to help make merry on that day. She may not frame the thought precisely as rendered, and still there is a consciousness, as she arranges a little surprise for this one, or concocts the dish of which another is so fond, that any little defect which may result in the hurry of manifold preparations under the manipulation of the most skillful fingers will never be detected by other than herself, for "love will savor all."

ROAST DUCK.—Select canvas-back ducks if possible, as they are in their prime at Christmas time, and those which are young, fat, and perfectly sound. Have them nicely picked, and if properly drawn, they will require simply wiping out thoroughly with a clean, dry cloth. Put a teacupful of chopped white stalks of celery in the body of each bird—this is simply for flavoring, and is removed before the duck is sent to table. Truss them and dredge well with pepper, salt and flour. Roast before a hot fire or in a very hot oven for from twenty to thirty minutes. They will only be moderately rare if cooked half an hour at the proper temperature. Over cooking spoils them. Baste every ten minutes with the salt and water in the pan. Serve with a rich brown sauce and currant jelly as an accompaniment, and you have a dish fit for a king.

ROAST GOOSE.—Only what is termed a green goose, that is, one from four to six months old, should be chosen. After carefully cleaning and trussing, fill with a stuffing of six potatoes boiled and mashed very fine, two medium-sized onions finely chopped, a tablespoonful each of sage and salt, two of butter, and a half-teaspoonful of pepper. Roast same as a turkey, dredging well with flour, salt and butter, and basting often. From an hour and a half to an hour and

three-quarters is usually required. Serve with a rich gravy to which the giblets have been added. Apple sauce is an indispensable accompaniment.

SHRIMP SALAD.—Prepare as directed for lobster salad in HOME MAGAZINE of January last. Serve in pretty shallow china cups, or in the fluted boxes or miniature baskets furnished for the purpose, lining each with nice crisp lettuce leaf, on which is placed a large spoonful of the salad.

A DAINY DISH.—Remove a circular portion of the rind of oranges at the stem end, carefully remove the pulp and alternate with powdered sugar and grated cocoanut between the layers, enriching the flavor with pineapple juice.

CRULLERS.—One cup of sugar, three eggs, butter the size of an egg, half of a small nutmeg grated, one teaspoonful of baking powder, about three cups of flour, or enough to form dough stiff enough to roll out. Roll out half an inch thick, cut in squares, make four long incisions in each square, lift by taking the two outside strips together, pinching them firmly with thumb and finger, fry in hot fat. Brush over each one, while yet warm, with white of egg, and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

WALNUT COOKIES.—One cup of walnut meats chopped rather fine, one cup of sugar, one egg well beaten, two tablespoonfuls of milk or water, one heaping teaspoonful of baking powder, flour to roll out as thin as possible. Brush with the white of egg and sprinkle with powdered sugar while yet warm. Keep in dry place. These are delicious with iced drinks or creams. Hickory nut cookies are made same way.

WHITE COCOANUT PUDDING.—Use one pound of freshly grated cocoanut, two cups of granulated sugar, the milk of the cocoanut or one cup of cream instead, two cups rich milk, the whites of eight eggs, a little grated lemon rind. Heat the cream and milk to the boiling point, and stir into it the whites of eggs and sugar, previously beaten together but not frothed. Stir until danger of eggs curdling is over, then add a pinch of salt and the cocoanut. Fill custard cups with the mixture, set in a tin pan of boiling water and place in the oven for three-quarters of an hour, when they should be firm in the center, indicating that they are done. Keep covered

with heavy paper while baking to prevent their browning.

WALNUT ICE CREAM.—Beat together a quart of milk, yolks of eight eggs, and two cups of sugar. Cook in a double boiler, stirring constantly till thick as rich sweet cream. When cold add a teaspoonful of salt, a cup of sugar, a quart of cream or very rich milk (half cream, half milk), the meats from a quart of English walnuts, pounding or chopping them fine. Freeze usual way. This is an excellent cream to follow an elaborate dinner, and to utilize the yolks of eggs left from other dishes.

COFFEE CAKE.—One cup of butter, one cup of *very* strong cold coffee, two cups of dry brown sugar, four cups of flour, one cup of raisins, one-half cup of citron sliced, one and a half cups of hickory nut meats chopped slightly, one teaspoonful each of cloves, cinnamon and grated nutmeg, yolks of eight eggs, one teaspoonful of soda.

FIG CAKE.—Cream two cups granulated sugar and one-half cup of butter; add one cup of cold water, then three and a half cups of flour sifted twice, with three heaping teaspoonfuls of Royal baking powder. Last add the stiffly beaten whites of five eggs. Bake in five ordinary layers of four deep jelly pans.

FILLING.—Trim and cut fine one-half pound figs. Add two cups of water and stew until tender. Now add one scant cup white sugar, and stew until the compound looks thick and sirupy. Let cool and spread between the layers while cake is still a little warm. The filling should be prepared first. Delicious.

PLAIN CHOCOLATE CAKE.—One cup of sugar, one cup of water, one whole egg, yolks of two, three rounded cups sifted flour, two heaping teaspoonfuls baking powder, two tablespoonfuls of butter. Bake in layers.

FILLING.—One cup powdered sugar, four large tablespoonfuls grated chocolate, whites of two eggs, flavor with vanilla. Beat all together briskly for at least five minutes. Excellent

ICING FOR CAKE.—Beat the white of one egg and a cup of powdered sugar (sifting it if at all lumpy) to a froth. Add two tablespoonfuls of cold water. This will cut without cracking. Do not beat the eggs until the sugar is added.

Suggestions on Making and Baking Cake.

To insure success have everything in readiness before beginning the work. Sift flour, have eggs ready chilled, as they make a finer froth. Beat yolks and whites separately, the whites until they will remain in the bowl when inverted. Use the finest granulated sugar for the body of cakes (with a few exceptions), and powdered for all uncooked fillings. Use *good* butter. To cream it easily in cold weather, warm slightly and beat up at once, or pour scalding water in the bowl letting it remain a few moments, then turn out, wipe dry, and put in the butter and proceed to beat it. Sugar should be added next, followed by the yolks, then milk or water; flour follows then the whites and flavoring. Never stir cake but beat it, bringing the batter up from dish with every stroke, driving the air into the spaces instead of out. Use earthen-ware and a wooden spoon. Pans should be greased with nice sweet lard, or butter which has been melted, allowing the salt to settle. A rather brisk oven is required for layer cake, a very moderate one for rich loaf cake. For the latter the baking tins should be lined with pure white paper, and a cap of heavy paper made to set over the loaf is better than a paper resting upon it. To remove cakes from the pan, allow them to stand a few moments after taking from the oven, when they become detached, and by passing a rather broad and long-bladed knife around and under them, bearing always away from the cake and toward the tin, even layer cakes may be removed without marring the shape in the least. Always place upon a cloth right side up to cool. Should it chance to scorch slightly, by placing it under-side uppermost *immediately* after taking from the pan, it may be scraped off in a moment with a *very* sharp carving knife, leaving not the slightest trace of the mishap. Should it really *burn*, moisten it with cold water the moment it is turned out of the pan, and even then every trace may be removed by scraping with a very sharp carving knife, as mentioned before. We originated this method of removing both color and flavor of the accident years ago, when in a fit of desperation at having scorched one of the layers of an otherwise very successful ornamental cake. A tin chest, or a stone jar, is the best receptacle in which to preserve cake.