



HOW TO MAKE AMERICAN CANDIES.

GIRLS who live in London, or any large town where American sweets are easily obtainable, will hardly care to take the trouble to make them. But many of our readers live in the country and remote places where these delicious sweets are never seen, and they may not object to trying their hands at the work.

These candies are so very pretty as well as excellent that they will come in very acceptably for dessert, be useful when you want to make a small birthday present, and be very nice for yourselves if you possess what is commonly called "a sweet tooth."

Yet another—no, two good reasons for learning to make them!

The American lady who taught me how these candies were made told me that, on one occasion, she had to take a stall at a bazaar, and it occurred to her to make quantities of these candies. This she did, putting them up into pretty little receptacles, and they sold capitally, a very good sum being realised by them.

There is a hint worth having for the next country bazaar at which you have to hold a stall, or at least to which you must contribute, and when you learn how quickly and easily the candies are made, I daresay you will use your knowledge practically. Then the next reason—one that will appeal to many girls who "wish to make a little money." If you live in the country where, as I say, these sweets are uncommon if ever seen, why not make them to sell? The more you make, the greater the profit. And, roughly speaking, if you sell the candies at three shillings a pound, which is quite a fair price, you will probably find that they have not cost you more than half that sum in materials. It would be worth trying, would it not? Now for directions.

The Foundation.—There is one foundation substance for American candies upon which changes are rung in the way of colouring, flavouring, and the mixing with it of nuts, etc., or the addition to it of fruit, nuts, etc. It is very important that this foundation—which, for the sake of clearness, I shall allude to throughout as the dough—should be well and carefully made, for the excellence of your candies much depends upon it.

You must procure some icing or confectioner's sugar, which is very much finer than castor sugar, and it is absolutely necessary that it should be quite fresh. If it is lumpy it is not fit to work with and you will not make good "dough." Break the white of an egg in one glass, and put an equal quantity of water into another. Put this into a basin and stir it with your sugar until of a dough-like consistency. The proportion of white of egg and water is two to each pound of sugar.

The next thing you require is a perfectly clean pastry-board or marble slab. If you like it, you can scrub a marble-topped washstand and use that. Many girls will be pleased to find by the way that they can make all these candies without a fire. A spirit-lamp for melting the chocolate is necessary if you have no fire, but that is all. Place a bit of dough on your slab and work it with your hands, using the sugar as if it were flour.

Candy Cherries.—Cut off a piece of your dough and make it into a thin long roll about half an inch wide. Take a sharp knife and divide it into small pieces. Take these pieces and roll them in your hands until they are like marbles. Those you want for chocolate creams you place aside to harden, but for cherries, etc., you use the marbles, as I shall call them, while they are soft. Get some glazed or crystallised cherries, slit them—without dividing them quite—and take out the stone. Press a small marble into the place where the stone was.

Cream Almonds.—Blanch your almonds, and cover them with dough. If you want to roughen the sugar up a little you can do so with a fork.

Walnuts.—Get the very best English walnuts, and, when shelled, do not remove the fine skin that is over them. Cut them carefully in half. If you have some that are broken do not use the bits for cream walnuts, as only perfect halves are of any use. Lay them aside and I will tell you later on how to use them. Now take two halves of your walnuts and put one on each side of a marble. Press together, and in so doing you will notice that the sugar comes out all round between the halves. Leave them to harden.

Cream Dates.—The dates must be fresh, and when procured slit down one side and the stone removed as in the case of the cherries. Put a marble into the place which was occupied by the stone, and, after pressing together, leave to harden.

Nougât.—Take your broken pieces of walnut and chop them up finely, adding almonds, pistachio nuts, and Brazil nuts. When all well chopped up small together stir these into some of the dough, this being best done in a basin, and it should be mixed up very thoroughly. When this is done place your dough on the slab and make it into long thin strips. Then cut it into pieces with a sharp knife.

Tricoloured Candy.—Take three pieces of dough—yellow, brown and red. (The colouring I shall describe later). Make each piece into a long, thin, narrow strip, and then lay the strips when on the board one over the other. This must be done very neatly, and, when completed, the edges smoothed off with a sharp knife. Cut into squares and leave it to harden. The squares can be about an inch square.

Crystallising.—This can be done to the almonds, cream walnuts, cherries and dates. Get some crystallised sugar and put some into a plate. Then put the cherries or whatever you want to crystallise into the plate, cover with another and shake it up between the two plates. You can also take each cherry, etc., and simply press it down at the edge on crystallised sugar. Needless to say this must be done at once before the dough has begun to harden.

Colouring.—Colouring the dough adds to the effect of the candies, and sometimes, as with orange, you colour and flavour at one and the same time. All colouring must be done while the dough is in the basin. Colour one lump and put it aside, then another. Mix a lump with chopped nuts and also put

aside, and cut and use all these varieties while moist. For orange colouring add a very little grated orange peel and a little of the juice to the dough. Chocolate colouring, which flavours as well, is done with grated chocolate or cocoa powder.

Flavouring.—The flavouring of the dough is done in the basin. As will have been seen, orange (or lemon) colour and flavour at the same time as does chocolate. Grated cocoanut makes a variety in flavour. Pounded almonds mixed in with the dough are delicious.

You can make your marbles, of course, plain white and somewhat tasteless by leaving the dough as it is, or else you can make your marbles coloured, or containing chopped almonds, grated cocoanut or nougât.

Chocolate Creams.—Some readers may like to make these, so I will give you full directions. But they can be so easily obtained and are not so essentially American that probably they will not find such great favour as the others.

Rock chocolate, which has no sugar whatever in it, is necessary, and you must be most careful that you get it perfectly fresh. Break your chocolate into a cup and place it on top of a kettle filled with boiling water and which is kept boiling until the chocolate melts. This you can do on the most ordinary spirit-lamp. Do not stir this at all.

When the chocolate is completely melted, place your cup on the table and drop into the chocolate one hard marble at a time. Please note the adjective, for the dough marbles must be left quite to harden—which takes some hours before you cover them with chocolate. And if you use nougât or coloured marbles, or those flavoured with cocoanut, etc., make them into marbles while soft, but do not use for covering with chocolate until quite hard.

The way you take your marble out of the liquid chocolate is with two silver forks. You can drain the ball by passing it from one fork to the other. A better plan even than the forks is to make yourself a little wire spoon. Any wire will answer the purpose very well.

Every now and then you must place your cup over the boiling water which should be kept boiling for the purpose. Place your chocolate creams to dry on waxed paper, which you can easily get at any confectioner's. You can cover some of your nougât with chocolate, treating it exactly as you did the chocolate creams.

Lightness of touch and general daintiness are of the very greatest importance in the making of all these candies. If, in using a spirit-lamp, you find you cannot place your cup easily over the kettle, then use a saucepan. Put hot water in it, and place the cup containing chocolate in that *bain marie* fashion.

In packing candies to send by post, you should use fine paper shavings or waxed paper.

If you could but have seen the little basket full of candies my American friend gave me of her own making, you would feel tempted to try what you could do, and no doubt succeed quite as well.