

motion may be slower, but it should be always upward.

Thus far a pound cake, though requiring care, is not difficult to make. The moulds of cakes of this sort that are spoilt, are spoilt in the baking. The oven, then, must be very moderate and very steady. Nearly or quite two hours will be required for baking a pound cake, if it has to be turned in the oven, it must be touched gently, and not shaken, when a straw or knitting-needle put into it can be drawn out quite clean it is done. It should be left in the tin for a while after being taken from the oven, otherwise it may break. When turned out it should be put sideways on a sieve till cold, so that the steam may thoroughly escape. The hoop or tin in which it is baked should be thoroughly greased in every part, and well lined with greased paper. When the cake is just put in the oven it is a good plan to put a cap of brown paper on the top, to prevent its becoming over brown. A crack at the top or an uneven surface is a sign of imperfect baking.

Sponge cake is generally considered very difficult to make, but individuals who have had practice in making it generally think it quite easy. It is true that it requires well beating, and consequently it needs a strong arm. For my own part, I may as well confess, that where an arm is likely to ensue, I do not think it is worth while to make sponge cakes at home. They are very useful cakes, because they enter into the composition of so many sweet dishes, but they can be bought at the confectioners for very little more than the cost of the material, and the cakes thus bought have not cost an arm's ache, for they have been beaten by machinery. Nevertheless, though we may not desire to make them regularly, it is just as well to be able to make them, and therefore girls may be glad of the following directions.

Prepare the cake mould and have the oven ready before beginning to mix. A sponge cake requires a moderate, steady oven, and the heat must not be increased after the cake is put in. M. Gouffé, who is a great authority on matters of this kind, says that the oven for sponge cake should be a "dark yellow paper temperature," which means, that when a piece of white paper is put in a baking tin in the oven it very soon becomes dark yellow. If it were to be black or nearly so the oven would be too hot.

The condition of the tins or moulds also is a point of very great importance for all cakes, but especially for sponge cakes. Many a cake, excellent in everything else, has been spoilt because the part that touched the tin has been unpleasant in taste. Girls should be more particular about the material they use for greasing the tins even than they are about the material used for shortening. In making plain cakes it is sometimes allowable to use dripping in the place of butter, but dripping alone should never be used for greasing the tins, the sweetest butter is needed for this purpose, and preferable even to butter is clarified butter and fat. This is M. Gouffé's way of preparing the same for greasing moulds.

Pick one pound of veal suet, chop it very fine, and put it to melt in a large stewpan over a slow fire. Stir the fat occasionally with a wooden spoon, and when it is quite clear take the stewpan off the fire, and stir with a skimmer until it is melted. Be careful that the fat does not boil over. When the butter and fat have become quite clear, and attained a slight yellow tinge, strain, and put by for use.

If butter is used for greasing moulds it should have the water squeezed from it before being applied to this purpose. When the moulds are to be used for sponge cakes and light cakes, make them hot, pour a little melted fat into them, and turn them round and about so that the fat shall run over every part of the inside

surface, then drain. When the butter has drained off, and before it is cold, strew fine sugar over the inside of the moulds, and knock them about so that the sugar shall cover all the butter. This sugaring must be quickly done. The moulds for rich cakes should be lined with paper, two or three thicknesses of paper being put in the bottom.

There is a general rule for making sponge cakes, which can be easily remembered. To make them we want any number of eggs, their weight in sugar, and half their weight in flour, with any flavourings that may be liked. Beat the yolks of the eggs and the flavouring essences together; add the sugar and flour, and lastly the whites of the eggs whisked till firm. The cakes may be flavoured with rose or vanilla extracts, with a little nutmeg or a little brandy, with grated lemon or grated orange rind. The addition of a little lemon juice makes them not quite so dry. They may be baked in moulds of any size, which moulds should not be more than half filled, and finely sifted sugar should be dredged thinly but evenly over the top of the batter. A band of kitchen paper two inches broad should be fastened round the top of the mould to allow for rising, and the oven door should not be opened until the cake has had time to rise and set firm. When baked, the cake should be the colour of ripe corn; and if there is any fear that it will become too dark, it should be placed when half baked in a tin containing salt or sand. It is enough when the blade of a small knife comes out free from dampness, and should be left in the tin for a short time before being turned out.

There are two methods of operations in making cake with egg: in one the ingredients are beaten cold, as already described; in the other, they are beaten over hot water. The process is more difficult than the ordinary one, but the result is excellent. Cakes thus made are very light and good. We talk, however, of a strong arm being needed for beating sponge cakes; decidedly a strong arm is needed for this process. The finest sponge cakes are made in this way.

Sponge cakes are, however, well known, and they can be made according to the old method. It will therefore, perhaps, be most useful if a recipe for *Mocha Cake* be given, Mocha cake being a very superior product, highly approved by those who know it. Get a good sized basin large enough to afford room for thorough beating—a basin which will hold three quarts will be about right. Procure also a stewpan in which this basin can stand. Put water into the stewpan and bring it to the boil. Put two ounces of castor sugar into the basin, break four eggs therein one at a time, stand the basin over the boiling water, draw the pan back, and whisk lightly and steadily till the batter froths up and is light and thick. While the batter is being beaten the water should be kept just below boiling point, and the beating will have to be kept up for twenty minutes. Take the basin off the fire and stir in four ounces of fine flour. Mix thoroughly, pour into a cake tin, and bake in a good oven.

To make *Coffee Icing for this Cake*.—Beat to a cream four ounces of sugar and two ounces of butter. Strain in a drop at a time, heating well between every addition—as much strong clear coffee as will make a stiff paste. Put this on the cake when it is quite cold with an icing tube, and dry in a cool oven.

*Chou Paste, for making Duchesse Loaves, Éclairs, etc.*—Put half a pint of water, two ounces of butter, and two ounces of castor sugar into a stewpan. When it boils draw the pan back, and mix in thoroughly five ounces of fine flour. Beat the whole well over the fire for some minutes (here the strength of arm comes in), until the ingredients form a smooth, compact paste, leaving the sides of the saucepan easily. If it has caught at the bottom of the

pan at all it must be put into another pan before the eggs are introduced. Let the mixture cool a little, add any flavouring essence that may be preferred, and three whole eggs, one at a time, and let one be thoroughly incorporated before another is added. The paste should be of such a consistency that it will fall of its own weight out of a spoon, but not so soft that it will spread. If the paste is too stiff, another yolk may be added.

*Petits Choux*.—Make paste as above. Put the mixture into a forcing bag with a plain tin pipe in the end, rather large in the opening. Butter a baking tin, and press the mixture on it in small pieces about the size of a pigeon's egg, and cut off each piece with a knife. Leave room between the pieces, because the cakes swell very much. Smooth them, then dust them with castor sugar, and bake in a slow, steady oven. They ought to be crisp and hard when baked, and of a light brown colour. They may be served plain, or they may be filled inside with whipped cream, fruit cream, or with delicate jam. If liked, they can be brushed over with beaten egg before baking, and just before they are done fine sugar can be sifted over them, and they can be put back in the oven till this is melted. Sometimes the choux after baking are dipped in caramel, then gently rolled in roughly chopped pistachios mixed with an equal proportion of lump sugar chopped small. The caramel is made by boiling a quarter of a pound of sugar in a gill of water for five minutes till it is stringy. It is to be noted that the choux should not be dipped in caramel till they are cold, and that they should not be filled with cream till they are cold. The incision is usually made in the side.

*Éclairs* are made by forcing choux paste out of the bag in lengths three inches long and three quarters of an inch wide. They should be brushed over with egg, and baked of a bright yellow colour. When cold they should be filled with whipped cream flavoured with vanilla, and glazed with coffee icing. To make the icing for this purpose, make half a gill of very strong coffee, mix it with about half a pound of icing sugar to a stiffish paste, and stir over the fire till warm. Have the éclairs by the side of the pan, pour the icing over them one by one, covering them evenly, and let them dry. If the icing should get cold before they are all done, add a few drops of water and warm again. Cakes of this description are excellent when they are a success. They are, however, difficult to make, and skilled cooks occasionally fail with them—a too hot oven soon ruins them.

It will perhaps be well if we conclude with a few general hints about cakes, which are useful to be remembered.

1. All cakes made without baking-powder or its equivalents, soda and cream of tartar, require a much slower oven than those made with them.
2. Cakes made with chemicals or with yeast dry quickly.
3. Cakes made with much butter need careful and long baking.
4. Cakes made with chemicals should be baked as soon as mixed.
5. To warm butter before heating gives cakes a "short" taste.
6. Cakes should never be moved or shaken in the oven after they have risen before they are firm. Very rich cakes especially need to be very gently handled when taken from the oven.
7. Cakes need to soak a few minutes even after a skewer comes from them dry.
8. When taken from the tin, cakes should be stood wrong way up on a sieve, to let the steam escape.
9. Cakes keep best if left with the paper in which they were baked still round them.

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