

GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS

Me a preparing for Christmas—me. Goodness knows I wish I was, but Christmas days ain't for me no more. And just because I was baking something to eat tomorrow, which happens to be Christmas, she thought I was a preparing for that day a special.

Betty Green sighed as she placed the pie in the oven, and pulled a kitchen chair up beside the stove. The new neighbor, who had but recently moved into town, and who knew nothing of Betty's history, had just left. With the Christmas spirit everywhere she had thought of course that Betty was preparing a feast for the day.

Now, if Jim hadn't never sailed away on that water-logged old Mary Ann, as he did a-going on four year ago, I guess I could have been preparing for Christmas like other folk. If there hadn't been nobody else, Jim and me could have enjoyed Christmas, and then maybe there'd a been somebody else—somebody what just about now would have been liking dolls or tin cars, and if so Jim and me would a been having a Christmas tree for that somebody and we'd be having the best Christmas in all South Cove.

My, how I did try to keep Jim from sailing in that Mary Ann. Anybody what knew about ships knew she wasn't fit to go to sea in, but Jim says it's the only berth he's likely to get, and taking it would mean our marrying just that much sooner and the Mary Ann or Jim ain't never been heard of since she left that South American place to go around the Horn on her way to China.

The bright eyes of Betty Green were wet with tears as she opened the oven door to raise the pie to a higher shelf. Ever since Jim Busby failed to return in time for the wedding which Betty had so carefully prepared for four years ago—a wedding which was to be the big event of the Christmas season at South Cove—she had had a lonely life.

Two months after the Christmas that was to have been Betty's wedding day her aged father had been carried to the village cemetery, leaving her all alone in the world. With no other relatives, and with no friends except those at South Cove, Betty remained in the little fishing town in which she had been born nearly twenty seven years ago.

With the baking finished, Betty left the kitchen and went into her bedroom. She wanted nothing so much as to be alone in that room that had been her father's—in that room where she kept carefully preserved the wedding clothes she had lavished so much care upon four years ago. These clothes and the faded photograph of Jim Busby on her bureau were all that were left of her romance. With these she would spend her Christmas eve, would live over again the courting days. And Jim should be there with her. That would be her Christmas.

With care she took each garment from its wrappings in the bureau drawer and spread them on the bed. The pretty wedding dress which Sarah Glover had helped her make—yes, she would put it on tonight just as she had planned to four years ago. Jim would like her to do that; he had always liked to see her prettily dressed, and maybe Jim might see her from the spirit world tonight.

As she fastened the gown she almost forgot that Jim could not be there, that it was all a make-believe. As she stood before the mirror the smile of four years ago came back again. She noted the color in her cheeks; it was like a bridal blush.

A rap at the door dispelled the illusion she had permitted herself for a few moments. She could not go to the door in that dress. The caller would have to wait, but he did not wait. She heard the door swing, a heavy step on the floor, and a voice—ah—such a familiar voice—calling Betty.

Fashion Fancies



By Marie Belmont

The cape frock has become an accepted thing in the Fall mode.

An amusing little capelet, split at each shoulder and bound with self material, makes the frock above different from other cape dresses.

The material is gray rep, and the dress is finished with tailored revers and gray bone buttons. The felt hat is cherry colored.

Jim! My Jim! she answered to Jim's tale of shipwreck on the Patagonian coast, of the months and years of practical captivity before he could get back to a seaport.

"And now," he said, "I am home to claim my Christmas bride."

"And I have our Christmas baking done," said Betty.

THOSE CHRISTMAS CANDIES

It is real fun filling a box with various kinds you have made with your own hands, and you have the further satisfaction of knowing they are wholesome and will not hurt the little folks. There are numberless varieties of all flavors and colors, hard and soft, "chewy" and brittle, with nuts or fruits, dipped in chocolate or plain.

Uncooked Candies
If you have not had much, or any, experience in candy making, you might well begin with the uncooked varieties. They rarely fail to come out well, and children can make them without fear of burning themselves.

Confectioners' sugar, finer than powdered sugar, must be used where called for in the recipes or the candy will not harden properly. This sugar must be kept in a tight-lidded jar or pail, and be sifted before use to free it of lumps. If the lumps are very hard, a large sheet of clean paper may be spread on the table and a rolling-pin used to crush the lumps till fine; then sift the sugar.

Cream Fondant
Put 2 tablespoons of heavy cream and

a teaspoon of light colored corn syrup in a bowl, add sifted cup of confectioners' sugar gradually, stirring until it is smooth. If it does not then make a stiff paste and as much more as is needed. Add whatever flavoring or coloring is desired, and use the fondant to fill dates or fruits, to put between or wrap around nut meats, or to use as filling centres for chocolates or other dipped bonbons.

It may be warmed over a bowl of hot water enough to be able to dip into it sections of orange or other fruits, nut meats, cherries, grapes, or centres of other flavor or color. It will have to be kept over the hot water while the dipping is going on, stirred constantly, and frequently it may have to be put a moment over the fire, to keep it from hardening too much for the dipping.

Egg Fondant
Put the white of an egg, half tablespoon of cold water and three-quarters teaspoon vanilla in a bowl and beat it until it is well-blended. Sift two cups of confectioners' sugar and add a spoonful at a time to the egg, stirring until well mixed each time. When it is very stiff, take it out on a board and knead it with your hands until it is perfectly smooth. Use it to stuff dates, for nut creams, or for centres for chocolates and bonbons.

The fondant can be colored by adding pink, green, yellow, lavender or orange color paste, and other flavors may be substituted for the vanilla.

Almond Creams
Blanche as many almonds as you wish to use. The easiest way is to cover the shelled nuts with boiling water, let stand two minutes, drain, cover with cold water, and drain again. Then the brown skins will easily slip off in the fingers. Dry the nuts with a towel or piece of cheesecloth. English walnuts or Pistachio nuts may be blanched in the same manner.

Put one of the blanched almonds each side of a small ball of fondant made on either of the above recipes, or cover the almonds with the fondant, shaping it with the fingers into a little egg, and roll it in granulated sugar.

Cherry Creams
Make up your fondant and roll it out 1/8 inch thick. Shape it with a round cookie cutter 1 1/2 inches diameter, and roll a cherry up in it, leaving a glimpse of the cherry showing. These may be wrapped in little squares of tissue, or laid in little paper cups. Vanilla, coffee and pistachio fondant look particularly well with the cherries.

Cherry Creams II
Cut as many smooth, firm candied cherries as desired into 4 sections each and open up like the petals of a flower. Put a little ball of the fondant in the middle, and in the back, in a tiny slit, put the end of a strip of angelica 1 1/2 inches long for a stem. These are pretty

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to put in the top of the box of homemade candy to dress it up.

Cherry Creams III
Cut your candied cherries almost in two, between the halves place a ball of fondant, and press it gently together, then roll in granulated sugar.

ABOUT BOOKS

(By THE ACADIAN BOOKMAN.)

Ralph Connor's new novel, "Treading the Winepress" (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, \$2.00), is the story of Nova Scotia and American characters before, during, and after the great war. A large part of the action takes place along the south shore of Nova Scotia, evidently between Lunenburg (Langenburg in the story) and Halifax. Chester is mentioned more than once, and Port Mahon is undoubtedly Mahone Bay. The locale gives the novel a special appeal to Nova Scotians. The Enoch Arden plot is worked out in this case by the events of the war,

and the means of making the hero disappear so as to be thought to be dead is the somehow good device of loss of memory. After his somewhat improbable discovery by one of his old sea-faring friends and his recovery of his memory as the result of an operation, he returns to find his betrothed married to a man she does not love. Honor in the hero is strong enough to enable him to meet the resultant moral crisis, but the heroine has to be killed off in an automobile accident because, though she completely approves of the stand of her lover, she is unable to live without him. In time the hero marries the girl with whom he was reared and who has loved him intensely for years. During the period of his recovery from the sorrow of the loss of his first love, he compels the rum runners to abandon Langenburg as a base.

Readers of Connor's novels will find in this book something different from his other works in the types of characters and particularly in the setting.

HOCKEY PICTORIAL IS INTERESTING VOLUME

The editor has received a copy of the Hockey Pictorial, 1926 edition, which is now on sale at all newsstands, and which is at once the handsomest and most complete publication ever produced in the world for any single sport. It is a marvel in artistry and industry of achievement. It is impossible to speak too highly of it.

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