

floured dripping-pan and bake in a moderate oven. When the cakes are done, before they are altogether cold, frost lightly with pink or white frosting or add the tiny pieces of candy which are made for this purpose.

#### Nell Cake.

To three cups of sugar add two and one-half cups of softened butter and whip to a light white cream. Add ten eggs, two at a time, beating for about five minutes between additions. To this mixture add four well-sifted cups of flour to which one teaspoonful of baking powder has been added; mix the whole well and add one-half cupful of shredded citron, four cupfuls of washed and dried currants, one teaspoonful each of nutmeg and cloves and one-half cupful of fruit juice. Mix well and pour into a paper-lined tin, which is also well protected with paper on the outside. Bake for two and one-half hours in a moderate oven. This should be made at least a week before serving it. When ready to serve, wrap each slice in white paraffin paper, tied with a red ribbon and a sprig of fir tucked under the ribbon.

#### Cranberry Snowballs.

Sift together two cups of flour, a pinch of salt, and three teaspoonfuls of baking powder; add sufficient sweet milk to make a soft batter, one cupful of sugar, one and a half cupfuls of chopped cranberries dredged with flour, and two well-beaten eggs. Pour the mixture into buttered pudding cups, and steam for two hours. Garnish with sprigs of holly and serve with hard sauce.

#### Plain Fruit Cake.

A pound each of butter and light brown sugar, one dozen eggs, a pound of flour, two pounds each of raisins and currants, half a pound of citron, one grated nutmeg, one tablespoonful of cinnamon, a teaspoonful each of allspice and cloves, half a pint of grape juice and two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Bake from two to three hours in a moderate oven.

#### Star Cookies.

To make these, take one and one-half cups of sugar, one cupful of butter, four eggs, pinch of salt, juice and grated rind of one lemon, teaspoonful of soda, three-eighths cupful of boiling water, and flour to mix (not too stiff). Roll out and bake in hot oven. When cold, frost with white icing. Decorate before the icing hardens with small, pink candies, those in the center grouped to simulate a star.

#### Dark Fruit Cake.

Two pounds each of cleaned currants and stoned raisins, a pound each of butter and sugar, one and one-fourth

pounds of flour, the eggs, two wingless-fuls of grape juice, a teaspoonful each of cloves, allspice and cinnamon, two tablespoonfuls of sweet almond meats, blanched and sliced, two ounces of candied lemon, two of citron and three-fourths of a cupful of New Orleans molasses. Flour the fruit, mix a teaspoonful of soda with the molasses and a teaspoonful of yeast powder with the flour. Bake slowly three hours.

#### CHRISTMAS CANDIES.

##### Chocolate Creams.

Form firm balls of good stiff fondant between the fingers, place on a greased paper and set away to dry. Melt confectioner's chocolate over hot water and dip the balls in.

##### Orange Strips.

Chop crystallized orange peel into small pieces. Mix with fondant. Cut in long strips, wrap in yellow paper or tie with orange-colored baby ribbon. Chopped figs, dates, nuts, and cocoanut may be substituted.

##### Fruit Paste.

Put one cupful raisins, one cupful stoned dates, one cupful figs, and two cupfuls mixed nuts through the food chopper twice. Mix with enough confectioner's sugar to make a dough sufficiently firm to roll on a board sprinkled with confectioner's sugar. Knead as you would bread. Then roll out one-half inch thick and cut into squares. Dust with the sugar and lay away in tin boxes lined with waxed paper.

##### Nut Crisps.

Cover the bottom of a well-buttered pan thickly with two cupfuls of mixed nuts or peanuts. Melt one pound of sugar in a saucepan, stirring constantly to prevent burning, and keep the sugar from the sides of the pan. As soon as melted remove from the fire and pour over the nuts. It will quickly change to caramel if not removed from the fire as soon as melted. When cold, break into pieces.

##### Pop-corn Balls.

Pop sufficient corn to make six quarts. This should be moistened before popping, as it makes it more tender and insures against any of the grains not popping. Boil one pint of molasses until it forms a ball when dropped in cold water. Mix one cupful of chopped nuts with the popped corn and pour the syrup over them, tossing with a spoon to mix thoroughly. When cool enough to handle, shape in firm balls.

##### Chocolate Pop-corn.

Cook one cupful of granulated sugar, one-half cupful of milk, three tablespoonfuls of grated chocolate and a lump of butter the size of a walnut together until a little dropped in water is quite brittle. Pour over one quart of popped corn, stirring so that all the kernels are coated.

##### Chocolate Candies.

Melt confectioner's chocolate over hot water. When almost cool enough to set, dip nuts, dates, raisins, chopped candied fruits, ginger or whatever is to be coated into the chocolate and lay on oiled paper. Chopped fruits, nuts or cocoanut may be stirred in, and small portions dropped onto waxed paper to set.

##### Date Dainties.

Stone dates, stuff with tiny rolls of peanut butter, walnut meats, pecan halves, bits of candied ginger, pineapple or cherries, roasted almonds and fondant flavored with lemon juice. Then roll in pulverized or granulated sugar.

##### Fruit and Nut Caramels.

Take equal portions of nut-meats, figs and dates and pass through the meat grinder. Mix thoroughly and place in a square shallow baking tin and pack down tight and even. When packed, the layer

should be about three-fourths of an inch thick. Cut in squares and wrap in oiled paper. If sticky to handle, dust the hands and each piece with powdered sugar.

#### CHRISTMAS PARTIES

##### A SURPRISE CHRISTMAS BELL

By Elizabeth J. Daniel

Instead of having a Christmas tree at this party a clever mother worked out an ingenious scheme which brought no end of delight to the children.

A large, red crepe paper Christmas bell decorated with holly graced the centre of the dining table, and after refreshments had been disposed of, this bell suddenly began in a mysterious manner to rise to the height of the chandelier, and there under it were the head, shoulders and arms of Santa Claus himself, coming up through the centre of the table. How the children did laugh when he began to talk to them in his droll way, and when he reached down seemingly into the floor and produced a gift for each child, repeating a funny little rhyme for each, their delight knew no bounds.

This was the way the mother had arranged the surprise. She first drew the centre boards of the dining table far enough apart to admit comfortably the broad shoulders of her brother, and laid stiff cardboard across the open spaces on each side of him. Tablecloths were folded and arranged upon the table, the folding being concealed by sprays of green decorating the cloth; heavy, flat weights were laid upon the cloth over the cardboard to keep it in place, and these weights were also covered with green. Red candies and dishes of small red candies were also surrounded by greens. A low chair was placed under the centre of the table for the accommodation of Santa Claus, and a basket of gifts was set by his feet. Lastly, after he had taken his seat the huge bell was placed over his head. An opening at its top gave him plenty of air, and from this opening a fine wire reached over the chandelier and out into an adjoining room, where it was held and gently pulled at just the right moment. The children have never tired of telling about this wonderful Santa Claus.

#### Santa's House Cleaning

By Mrs. Luke Conneally

The invitations were sent direct to the children from Santa Claus in the following form:

"Santa Claus invites — to help him clean and put in order his cupboard on Christmas Eve. Some toys have been mislaid, and Santa Claus offers a prize to the child who finds the oldest mislaid gifts.

"He also invites you to lunch with him on snowballs and ice at his home near the North Pole."

All the decorations were white. The cupboard was made of boxes of all sizes, and gifts were hidden in them. Strips of white outing flannel were tacked in front of and inside the boxes to help screen the gifts. A curtain was drawn before the cupboard while the search was going on, so as to have but a dim light to search by. There were any amount of pockets hidden in the top and sides, and there were some old-fashioned toys hidden. These were searched for more eagerly than the newer ones. Some were found marked with the names of the children's older brothers and sisters, and

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these, of course, were given to the younger ones. One little girl found an old-fashioned doll with her mother's name on it, and she still takes pride in the doll "that mamma should have had."

Santa Claus's house was an arch in white beside a white pole. The table was all white, and around it were made little seats shaped like snowbanks and covered with white outing flannel or sheet wadding. The sheet wadding glistened like snowbanks in very cold weather. The snowbanks were little cakes and cream puffs covered with white icing. Rock candy was the ice, and there was also ice cream.

Among the white decorations were hung icicles of glass (glass pendants from a hanging lamp), and there were also white candles among the decorations. The white draperies consisted of sheet wadding, outing flannel, and cotton. All of this was entirely new to the children, and they pronounced it much more jolly than a Christmas tree.

#### Holiday Mail and News Stand

By Mrs. G. M. Clapham

It was found necessary, in order to meet a sudden emergency, to hold a party to provide immediate funds for a "Home for Friendless Children." The county fair grounds and also its largest exhibition building were offered to the committee.

The building was a very plain structure with bare beams and boards, too high to admit of anything so extravagant as artistic draperies.

An amateur carpenter partitioned ten feet of space on each side of the corner, making a good facsimile of a country post office. Another amateur painted over the delivery windows the usual post office signs, such as "Foreign Mail," "Local Delivery" and "Money Orders." Ordinary builders' laths were used as a framework, making a rather close lattice-work, and having a rough coat of paint.

The mail was advertised as being of a Christmas character, and by no means confined to letters. A bulletin in a conspicuous position on the corner advertised unclaimed letters and parcels.

Registered letters were those written by eminent authors and by men and women distinguished for talent or position. Anything over a dollar was accepted in payment for these, and nothing under.

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