



As Christmas approaches the dreams of all good housekeepers are disturbed with visions of plum-pudding, mince pies and the many dainties of the time which they take such pride in preparing. The following recipes are recommended as old reliable ones:—

**AN OLD ENGLISH PLUM-PUDDING.**—One pound currants, one pound raisins, one pound suet, three-quarters pound bread crumbs, one quarter pound flour, half-dozen eggs, one teaspoonful salt, one pint milk, one-half pound sugar, lemon, citron, and orange peel, one-half nutmeg. Beat the eggs and spice well together, mix the milk with them by degrees, then the rest of the ingredients, and add a glass of brandy if desired.

**AN OLD AND EXCELLENT RECIPE FOR MINCE MEAT.**—Take two pounds beef boiled, picked from skin and minced, two pounds suet chopped fine, six pounds currants, eight large apples chopped fine, a two-penny loaf grated, one ounce nutmeg, one-half ounce cloves, allspice, pepper and salt, one-half pound sugar. Grate the peel of an orange and lemon. Pour over the whole a pint of brandy.

**RICH PLUM CAKE.**—Beat one pound butter to a cream and add one pound brown sugar, beat ten minutes longer, then add eight eggs, two at a time, beating them as they are put in, until the whole is very smooth; stir in one-quarter pound flour, a little at a time till it is well mixed; season with nutmeg and add one pound currants the last thing, together with citron and orange peel cut in thin slices. Bake two hours.

**FRUIT CAKE.**—Beat a pound of butter to a cream, add ten large or twelve small eggs, beat in one at a time, one pound of sugar and spices, two pounds currants, one pound raisins, one pound flour, two teaspoonfuls baking powder, and last citron, lemon and orange peel, with sliced almonds, also a glass of brandy if desired. Beat it a long time.

**ICE CREAM CAKE.**—One cupful of sugar, one and a half cupfuls of flour, one-half of a cupful of corn starch, the whites of four eggs beaten stiff, one half cupful of butter, one-half cupful of milk, one and a half teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Bake in layers and spread with boiled icing.

**COCOANUT CANDY.**—One and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water, butter half the size of an egg. Boil without stirring till a bit of it hardens dropped in cold water. Then stir in the mixture into a buttered tin. Set in a cool place, and when sufficiently hardened, cut in small squares.

**ICE CREAM CANDY.**—Two cups sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water,  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup vinegar, butter half the size of an egg, 2 teaspoonfuls vanilla. Boil, without stirring or shaking, till it hardens, dropped from a spoon in water. Then take from the fire, pour into a buttered dish, and cool. Then pull as molasses candy, draw out into long sticks and cut in small pieces.

**CHOCOLATE MACAROONS.**—Melt three ounces of Baker's chocolate, slowly work it to a thick paste with one pound of pulverized sugar and three whites of eggs. Roll the mixture down to the thickness of about one quarter of an inch; cut it in small round pieces with a paste cutter, either plain or scalloped; butter a pan slightly and dust it with flour and sugar, half of each; place the pieces of paste or mixture in and bake in a good steady oven.

**FIG CAKE.** Fig cake furnishes a delicious variety in layer cakes. For the cake, use a cupful and a half of sugar, half a cup of butter, the whites of four eggs, a teaspoonful and a half of baking powder, one cupful of milk and two and a half cupfuls of flour. To make the filling for the cake cut a dozen figs into small pieces, just cover them with water, let them come to a boil and then remove at once from the stove. The well beaten whites of four eggs should be ready; stir the figs and a cupful of sugar into these. Heat well and spread between the layers.

**CHOCOLATE SHERBET.**—One and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups sugar, 1 cup milk, butter half the size of an egg. Boil in a granite kettle or bright tin dish, eight to fifteen minutes, or until it hardens as a spoonful is dropped in cold water. Then take to an open door or window and beat vigorously until it crackles. Pour into a buttered tin to cool, and cut in squares.

#### LADIES' MISCELLANY.

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS.**—Those who have put off making their presents till now will find the following simple articles of use, as they are quickly and easily made. The mothers are the easiest to cater for at this season of puzzled shoppers. There are so many dainty articles which they will welcome—silver, china, articles of cut glass, or choice napery for the table, a Japanese umbrella stand, a work basket prettily fitted up, a linen scarf for the sideboard embroidered or finished with "drawn work," crocheted slippers, dainty aprons, stationery, pocket books, card cases, the long pearl-handed boot-buttoners, etc.

A novelty in bags is one made of bright red silk ribbon and rings. It will need seven-eighths of a yard of three-inch ribbon, eleven dozen of small brass rings, and one spool of knitting silk. Tie one end of the silk to a ring, then crochet over the ring; it will look, when done, like a heavy button-hole edge. Cover all the rings in this way.

Make a strip of the rings by sewing the edges where they join firmly together, four rings wide and twenty-eight rings deep; on one edge of this sew the broad ribbon, then double the length half way, and sew together the outside edges (this makes a bag half ribbon and half rings); put an extra row of rings around the top, letting it run across the ribbon; face the ribbons about two inches from the top for a shining, run a ribbon through this and the rings, for drawing up the bag, or you can use a cord and tassel.

**CHAMOIS SOFA PILLOW.**—A good chamois skin may be had for seventy-five cents. The pattern of one was outlined with gilt, and the figures filled in with old rose, dull blue, and olive green. The pillow was finished with a heavy cord.

A linen scarf or square centre-piece, outlined with some conventional design, in wash silks, and filled in with French darning, is used as a decoration for the dining table. Linen, or a fine quality of butcher's linen, is used. The edges may be hem-stitched or fringed. Forty-two inch material, by dividing in half, will make two. Make it a perfect square, or proportion it to the length of your table, leaving an equal space all around. The leaves of the design are more effective if outlined with rope silk, and then filled in with French darning in wash silk.

**SLEEP SLIPPERS.**—Simple as is the pattern, it has been carefully planned, and will be found to make a neatly fitting and comfortable shoe. A skein of Germantown wool, in white or some delicate or bright colour, and a little Shetland wool or knitting silk for the ankle edge, are the materials required. With a bone crochet needle make a chain of eight stitches. Work, in short crochet, all around this chain, making two stitches in the fourth chain, so that there are fifteen in the row. Work three rows around this little oval, widening at each end and at the middle where the first widening was made. After these rows, widen only at the middle until twenty or twenty-two rows are completed. Now work back and forth, omitting eleven stitches—five on each side of the middle stitch. These sixteen rows are crocheted alternately on the back and the front loops of the work, so that the stitch may resemble the rest of the shoe. Crochet together at the heel, and begin the ankle. This is quite plain, six rows in short crochet, missing a stitch at the corners where the eleven stitches were left. This narrowing shapes a slender ankle. Then work one row of double crochet, for a cord or ribbon to be run in. This row is not narrowed, neither are the two plain rows of short crochet which follow it. Now with the Shetland wool or the silk make a row of scallops thus: one short crochet, miss one, five double crochet, miss one, one short crochet. Repeat. If silk is used, be careful to fasten it strongly and leave an inch of the silk run in at the wrong side of the work. A crocheted cord, or, still prettier, a narrow white ribbon run in around the ankle and tied in dainty bows, finishes the pretty gift.

A really pretty home-made shade may be made of strings of coloured beads thickly sewn on a narrow ribbon for a heading, and used as a cover for a porcelain shade.

Drapery scarfs for pedestals, easels, or for corners or other pieces of furniture are made of soft repped silks, with a cluster of flowers done on one end in tapestry stitches; the design comes traced in crewels in canvas basted in the silk for the worker to cross.

New folding photograph cases, that look like a bit of Dresden china, are of white linen, with the several dainty flower designs of that porcelain painted about it, even the Dresden mark of crossed sconces being done quite low in the glass that covers the picture. These are quite small to hold a carte de visite, or else large enough for a cabinet picture, and their folded fronts are lined with celadon, rose or blue, in tint Dresden colouring.

Drapery scarfs of China silk are edged with a deep antique lace, crocheted in Florence knitting silk the shade of the drapery.

Pretty and useful shopping bags are made of black or brown cloth, with black or bronze appliqué leather figures for decoration.

Folding workbags have a standing frame of whitewood, that folds compactly, and in this is suspended a large bag of flowered silk, challi or cretonne, with inner pockets for small articles.

#### OUR NEW YORK LETTER.

NEW YORK, December, 1889.

MY DEAR KATE,—If I have missed the mail this week do not blame me, but my slow-going English watch, which apparently cannot keep up with the rate of New York life. Yesterday morning we started to keep a one o'clock appointment in Staten Island. When we arrived at the ferry we were told that the ferry had just gone. After waiting a few moments, I asked the ticket agent when the next ferry would go. "At three o'clock," said the man. "Three o'clock," I exclaimed; "three long hours to wait. Oh, dear!" "No, Miss, only twenty-five minutes." I gazed at him in astonishment, wondering which of us was crazy, he or I. Speculating as to the Ferry Company's reasons for employing a harmless lunatic, I returned to give our party the pleasing information that we were too late for our appointment, when one of them rushed up to tell me that my watch was just two hours and a half slow. Well, my dear, after expressing my opinion about that timepiece, we took the next car to Tiffany's to get that thing regulated. And there we spent the whole afternoon—at Tiffany's, I mean—not in the car.

I promised last week to tell about the bronzes and statuary, and so I went straight to the second floor, where they are displayed. In the front room is a beautiful piece of statuary by Thaxter, called "Love's First Dream." A lovely young girl stands dreaming, with closed eyes; her arms are crossed behind her head, and resting against her right shoulder leans a Cupid, bending forward with a tender, arch look, to gaze into her face. The girl's lower limbs are entangled in a net, almost hidden with flowers. Her dreamy, happy face, and the delicacy of the flowers and netting, are something exquisite beyond description. Near the pedestal is a crayon portrait of the sculptor, Thaxter, a young man of twenty-four, with a mournful expression on his handsome, boyish face. Underneath is written: "Died at Florence, 1881, aged twenty-four." Does not that make you feel sad, Kate? To die so young and so gifted, the brilliant promise of his manhood unfulfilled. I could obtain no information about him; his work had ceased; he was dead; that was all. Yet his productions sold before they were finished. Ah, well, such is life. "Love's Dream" is valued at \$2,400. Another very pretty little bust from the same chisel is "Pouting." A little round, dimpled face, the little brows drawn down in a frown, and the sweet little lower lip thrust up in a pout. Altogether a very fascinating, naughty little face. At the opposite side of the room is a piece of statuary called "Blind Love." I do not know by whom. A Cupid flying, poises on a young girl's raised arm, and, placing both hands over her eyes, completely blinds her, while she tries vainly to snatch away his hands. The Cupid mischievously enjoys her perplexity. It is pretty and graceful, and though I admire both, I prefer "Love's First Dream." Quite different in style from "Pouting" is another bust by Thaxter, "Meg Merrilies." A horrible witch like face, the lips drawn back from the toothless gums, in ghastly length, and straggling locks of wiry looking hair half hides her scrawny neck. Ugh! It gives one nightmare just to recall. Near "Meg Merrilies" are two or three pieces by Stanley Conner. One is an "Undine," in the act of raising the veil from her face. The features, plainly seen through the filmy covering, are soft and pure. At the right is "Dream of Infancy" by the same sculptor. Two pretty doves hold a sheet between them, in which nestles, sleeping, a sweet little boy baby, his rounded cheek supported on his dimpled hand, a tender smile is on his parted lips. A third by Conner is called "Simplicity," and is a young girl's head with a poke bonnet tied down with bronze ribbons. I did not care for this, the bronze ribbons spoiled it. However, that is a matter of taste, I suppose.

The Russian bronzes have a place to themselves. They excel all other bronzes in beauty of detail. One of the largest is the "Elopement." Three spirited horses are drawing a "troika" at a gallop, and the driver has risen to his feet to urge them to yet greater speed. In the back is seated a man in furs, whose arm is thrown round a girl, who clings to him with both hands, and whom he seems to be reassuring. The girl wears no furs and is little protected against the cold, evidently an unexpected meeting has led to a hasty resolve. The swift motion is wonderfully realistic, the horses being particularly good. The next one is "Cossack Foragers," by Lanceray. Three Cossacks on horseback are watering their horses; the horse in the middle has just heard a strange sound, his head is raised with an intent and almost human expression of intelligence. Certainly the Russians excel in the representation of horses. A lovely French bronze of "Orpheus and Eurydice," at the moment that Orpheus, having won her back from Pluto, turns to clasp her in his arms, when she vanishes forever. Orpheus half kneels with outstretched, longing arms, which almost touch her, but Eurydice is being drawn back by an irresistible invisible power. You remember the pretty story, Kate? Eurydice, the beloved wife of Orpheus, dies, and he goes to Pluto's kingdom, the abode of departed spirits, to implore her restoration. Pluto finally consents to permit her to follow Orpheus to earth, on condition that he never looks behind him till beyond his kingdom. They have almost reached the boundary, when Orpheus, forgetful for the moment, in loving impatience turns to look once more on the beloved face. But, alas! alas! the condition is broken and she disappears forever.

A new sort of curious China work is called *pâte-sur-pâte*, that is, one layer of paste laid with a brush upon another. The process is entirely new and extremely difficult, only one person in the world doing it successfully, a Frenchman called Sallon. The price, to my unsophisticated mind, seemed awful, \$1,200 for a little piece 8 by 14 inches in size! The ground was a dark olive green, with raised white figures of men and women. Some of the prettiest glass is "Cameo." It is made in layers of different colours and then cut, just like the real cameo. The figures' heads and busts are in the same style.

On Thursday we saw Booth and Modjeska in "Hamlet," Madam Modjeska as *Ophelia*. I never saw anything more heart-breaking than *Ophelia's* madness. I think I am pretty hard-hearted, but the tears streamed from my eyes. Her mirth was even more pitiful than her grief. "Hamlet," if well played, is too painful to see often, though I can never sympathize with the *Prince's* cruel treatment of *Ophelia*. Booth is magnificent. The awful scenes that drive a noble mind mad for revenge made my blood run cold. I was very much struck with one piece of clever suggestive acting. In the last act, after *Laertes* is fatally wounded, as the *King* enters, *Hamlet* rushes towards him with drawn sword. The *King*, endeavouring to escape, mounts the throne. The *Prince* kills him, but feeling the