



MINNIE MAY'S

DEPARTMENT.

Minnie May's
Cook Book.Poplar Grove,)
April 6, '74. }

Dear Minnie May,—

As I am greatly interested in your column I thought I would send you some recipes for your Cook Book. Here is one for a

BRIDE CAKE.

Take butter, 1½ lbs.; sugar, 1½ lbs., half of which is to be Orleans sugar; eggs, well beaten, 2 lbs.; raisins, 4 lbs., having the seeds taken out and chopped; English currants, having the grit picked out and nicely washed, 5 lbs.; citron, cut fine, 2 lbs.; sifted flour, 2 lbs.; nutmegs, 2; and as much mace in bulk; alcohol, 1 gill to ½ pt., in which 12 or 15 drops of oil of lemon have been put. When ready to make your cake, weigh your butter and cut it in pieces, and put it where it can soften, but not melt; next, stir the butter to a cream and add the sugar, and work till white; next, beat the yolks of the eggs and put them to the sugar and butter. Meanwhile, another person should beat the whites to a stiff froth and put them in.—Then add the spices and flour, and last of all the fruit, except the citron, which is to be put in about three layers, the bottom layer about an inch from the bottom, and the top one an inch from the top, and the other in the middle, smoothing the top of the cake by dipping a spoon or two of water upon it for that purpose.

The pan in which it is to be baked should be about 13 inches across the top, and 5½ or 6 inches deep, without scollops, and 2 three-quarter pans, which it will fill also. They will require to be slowly baked about 3 to 4 hrs. Try whether the cake is done by piercing it with a broom splinter, and if nothing adheres, it is done. Butter the cake pans well, or if the pans are lined with buttered white paper, the cake will be less liable to burn. Moving cakes when baking tends to make them heavy.

FRUIT CAKE.

As a side accompaniment to the bride cake, you will require many fruit cakes, which are to be made as follows:

Butter, sugar, English currants, eggs and flour—of each, 5 lbs. Mix as in the bride cake. Frosting and icing for cake:—The whites of eggs beat to a perfect froth; stiff, pulverized white sugar, 2 lbs.; starch, 1 tablespoon; pulverized gum arabic, ½ oz.; the juice of one lemon. Sift the sugar, starch and gum arabic into the beaten eggs, and stir well and long. When the cake is cold, lay on a coat of the frosting; it is not best to take much pains in putting on the first coat, as little bits of cake will mix up with it, and give the frosting a yellow appearance, but on the next day make more frosting the same as the first, and apply a second coat, and it will be white, clear and beautiful; and by dipping a knife into cold water when applying, you can smooth the frosting nicely.

PIE-CRUST GLAZE.

In making any pie which has a juicy mixture, the juice soaks into the cake, making it soggy and unfit to eat. To prevent this, beat an egg well, and with a brush or a bit of cloth wet the crust of the pie with the beaten egg just before you put in the juicy mixture. For pies which have a top crust, also wet the top with the same before baking, which gives it a beautiful light brown color.

Here is a recipe for

KEEPING WEEDS DOWN.

To destroy weeds in walks, take water, 10 gal.; stone lime, 20 lbs.; flour of sulphur, 2 lbs. Boil in an iron kettle; after settling, the clear part is to be poured off and sprinkled freely upon the weedy walks.—

Care must be taken, for it will destroy the flowers if touched.
No more at present.

ADDIE G. BRAY.

Newtonville, April 3, 1874

A good house-wife is one of the first blessings in the economy of life; men put a great value upon the housewife qualifications of their partners after marriage, however little they may weigh them before; and there is nothing which tends more to mar the felicity of married life than a recklessness or want of knowledge in the new house-keeper, of the duties which belong to her station. We admire beauty, order, and system in everything, and we admire good far. If these are found in their dwellings, and are seasoned with good nature and good sense, men will seek for their chief enjoyment at home; they will love their home and their partners, and strive to reciprocate the kind offices of duty and affection. Mothers that study the welfare of their daughters will not fail to instruct them into the qualifications of married life; and the daughters that appreciate the value of these qualifications will not fail to acquire them.

MOTHER'S CAKE.—2 cups of sugar, 1 of sour cream, ½ cup of butter, 4 eggs, 2 of raisins; soda and spice.

BATTER PUDDING.—1 quart of sweet milk, 5 eggs, flour enough to make a thin batter; bake half an hour, and serve with hot wine sauce.

STEAM PUDDING.—1 cup of sour milk, 1 teaspoonful of cream-tartar, 1 half-teaspoonful of soda, 2 eggs, 1 teaspoonful of salt; make as thick as pancakes, and steam one hour. Add whatever fruit you like.

MRS. J. McCULLOUGH.

Stephen, April 15, 1874.

Dear Minnie May,—

As the ADVOCATE is open to the farmers' wives as well as to Uncle Tom's nephews and nieces, I think I must take up courage and contribute something to its columns. I don't think I shall have a prize this time, but first must be first. I can give you some receipts which may prove useful to some of your readers:—

TO RENDER BOILED FISH FIRM.—Put a small bit of saltpetre with the salt into the water in which it is boiled; a quartet of an ounce will be sufficient for a gallon of water.

TO FRY TROUT.

Clean and dry them in a cloth; beat the whites of four or five eggs on a plate, and dip the trout first in the egg and then in fine bread crumbs; fry to a nice brown, and serve with crisp parsley. Excellent!

PEACH SALAD.

Pare and slice half-a-dozen fine ripe peaches, arrange them neatly in a dish, strew sugar thickly over them, and pour on them two glasses of wine, or brandy, if preferred.

PICKLED ONIONS.

For one quart of peeled onions take one quart of pale white wine vinegar, add to it a desert spoonful of salt, one ounce of whole white pepper; bring these quickly to a boil. Take off the scum, and put in the onions; simmer them for two minutes only, turn them into clean stone jars, and when cold tie a skin or two folds of thick paper over them.

WHITE CURRANT JAM.

Boil together quickly for seven minutes equal quantities of fine white currants, picked with the greatest nicety, and of the best sugar, pounded; stir the jam gently the whole time, and be careful to skim it thoroughly. Just before it is taken from the fire, throw in the juice of one good lemon to four pounds of fruit.

GOOD, SMALL RICH CAKES.

Whisk four eggs light, add to them half-pound of fine sifted sugar; pour to them by degrees a quarter pound of clarified butter as little warm as possible; stir lightly in with these four ounces of dry sifted flour, beat well for ten minutes. Put into small buttered patty-pans, and bake the cake for fifteen minutes. They should be flavored with lemon, mace or cinnamon, according to the taste.

A CHEAP SUET PUDDING.

With a pound of flour mix well an equal weight of boiled and finely pressed potatoes, a quarter pound of suet well minced, a teaspoonful of salt; make into a stiff batter with milk, tie in a wet or floured cloth, and boil for one hour and ten minutes.

TOMATO CATSUP.

To a half-bushel of ripe tomatoes, sealed and skinned, add one quart of best vinegar, one pound of salt, quarter pound black pepper, one ounce of African Cayenne, quarter pound Allspice, one ounce cloves, one pound mustard, six good large onions, two pounds brown sugar, and one handful of peach-leaves. Boil these together for three hours, stirring constantly to keep from burning. When cool strain through a fine sieve, and bottle it for future use. It will improve by keeping, and give zest to appetite even under the ribs of death.

BLACKBERRY SYRUP.

Blackberry Syrup for Cholera Morbus:—Two quarts high bush blackberry juice, one pound loaf sugar, a half-ounce nutmeg, ½ ounce cloves, ½ ounce cinnamon, ½ ounce allspice; pulverize the spice and boil all 15 minutes; when cold add 1 pint brandy.

TO BLACK A BRICK HEARTH.

Mix a portion of blacklead with a little soft soap and water; boil and apply with a brush. ELIZABETH BASTARD.

Stephen, April 15, 1874.

DEAR MINNIE MAY,—As to the principles of cooking, I think almost any woman can cook if she has the wherewith to cook with; to cook economically is an art, and to save in cooking is what everyone should learn. Money making is an art; now, there is more money wasted in the kitchen than anywhere else. Many a hard working man has his substance wasted in the kitchen; and it is not so much that we earn as what we have that makes us well off. While some put dimes into pies and cakes, others only put cents, and the cent dishes are the healthiest, and a few plain and cheap receipts by which Jennie Jones might profit, perhaps won't be out of place. It is every woman's duty to make the most of what she has intrusted to her. We are commanded to gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.

A NICE PLAIN TEA CAKE.

4 eggs, 2 cups nice brown sugar, 1 teaspoonful soda, 3 cups sour milk, 1 cup melted lard or half butter, half a grated nutmeg. Sift in flour, sufficient to make such a consistency that it will not run from a spoon when lifted upon it.

A SURPRISE CAKE.

1 egg, 1 cup sugar, ½ cup lard or butter, 1 cup sweet milk, 1 teaspoonful soda, 1 teaspoonful cream of tartar. Flavor with lemon or spice. Use flour sufficient to make the proper consistency, and you will be surprised to see its beauty.

Here is a nice plain gravy, far healthier than pork gravy, and nice with all kinds of vegetables.

A NICE PLAIN GRAVY.

Peel and slice a few onions and boil in 3 pints of water until done; add salt to suite the taste; then mix a tablespoonful of flour with a few spoonfuls of milk, and stir into the gravy; add a small piece of butter.

A PLAIN BREAD PUDDING.

Take a dry piece of bread and put it in cold water until soft, then press out the water and break it up fine, and enough to put in a 4 quart dish; put in 3 eggs, a little soda, sugar to taste and ¼ pound of currants; a little spice and milk enough to fill the dish; bake 2 hours. Pieces of bread, that would otherwise be wasted, may thus be made into nice puddings.

If Mrs. McIntosh will use the Pain King prepared by Mr. Robert Stark, of Woodstock, she will find it a very good thing to stop pain and decay in teeth, as I have tried it and know it to be the best thing, and if the teeth are hollow put pulverized saltpetre into them when they are painful.

Lakeside, April 10, 1873.

E. S.

Dear Minnie May,—

I have long been intending to write you again, but somehow one thing or another would turn up that I could not get at it, but I will endeavor to be more mindful in future. Here is a cheap and simple cake, which I will call

JENNIE'S CAKE.

One cup buttermilk, half a tea spoon soda, one cup sugar, a tablespoonful of butter, one cup and a half of flour; sprinkle a few currants on the top. Bake it in a flat pie dish. A little lemon improves it, or it is nice with a small tablespoon of ginger, or a cup of currants. So you see it may be varied to make two or three kinds of cake.

BURNSIDE PUDDING.

If you are caught by company coming just at dinner time, and no dessert ready, take a half dozen or so soda biscuits; pour boiling water over them to cover them; let them stand till ready to serve dessert; then help out a biscuit to each, with some cream and sugar over, and if you wish, and have it to spare, a teaspoon of nice jelly. It makes a delicious dessert, and is so easy to make. The steam cooked biscuits do not soak well.

Here is another nice pudding:

COTTAGE PUDDING.

Two cups flour, one of sugar, one of milk; two tablespoons butter, one teaspoon cream-tartar, one egg. Beat all together, and add one teaspoon soda. Flavor with lemon.—Bake one hour, in a moderate oven. Serve with cream or sauce.

VARIETY CAKE.

One cup and a half of sugar, two cups and a half of flour, half cup of butter, half cup sweet milk, three eggs, one teaspoon cream tartar, half teaspoon soda, a little salt. This will do as a loaf cake, in which case it improves it to flavor with lemon or rose-water, and ice it; or you make it into patty cakes, sticking two or three currants on the top, or you may bake it on flat tins for jelly cake.

In making cookies or other flat cakes, it improves their appearance very much to make a whip with the white of one egg beaten up, with a scant tablespoon of white sugar. Boil a few raisins in a little water. When the cakes are cooled, put on a little of the whip in the centre of each cake, and lay a raisin on top; return to a cool oven to set.

Stanley, April 15th, 1874.

Dear Jennie Jones,—

Your letter moved my sympathy, for I too have frequently felt as you did. Let me try, if I can, to cheer you up a little. Are you not looking down too much on your work as something degrading? Do not allow yourself to take this view of it; look on it rather as the duty God has given you to do for Him. In this light the most menial service is ennobling, because done for Him.—As Keble's beautiful hymn has it:

"The trivial round, the common task
Shall furnish all we ought to ask,
Room to deny ourselves—a road
To bring us daily nearer God."

Then, too, do not make yourself a slave to your work. I mean by making yourself more work than is necessary. By all means let John and the boys have variety in their meals, but do not give them puddings that take three hours to make. Give them simple tasty changes, which are inexpensive and wholesome. If you have apples you can make a great variety of nice dishes with very little labor. Do not give them many fine things at once, but distribute them through the days. Another great economy of time is to have your work for the day all arranged beforehand in your head. Let the different heavy departments of work come on different days, in regular routine. Have every duty done in its proper time. By attention to the planning of one's work, one may gain an hour or two for reading or otherwise improving the mind. Take good walks out of doors, not down to the barn-yard, but out of sight and sound of everything that can annoy the mind by reminding it of petty cares, unless you are like a girl I once knew, whose admiration of a lovely green field was based on the fact that it would be such a nice bleaching ground! There is nothing like the fresh open air for dispelling the "blues" and raising the spirits. Dear Jennie, do not despond; let your thoughts frequently rise to that better land where there is no more weariness.

Yours sympathizingly,
MARY KAY.

✻ We have to lay over several communications for next month.