

gers as *thin as possible*; prick them all over, and bake them in a somewhat brisk oven from ten to twelve minutes.

THE COLONEL'S BISCUITS.

Mix a slight pinch of salt with some fine sifted flour; make it into a very smooth paste with good cream, and bake the biscuits gently, after having prepared them for the oven like those which precede. Store them as soon as they are cold in a dry canister, to preserve them crisp: they are excellent.

AUNT CHARLOTTE'S BISCUITS.

These biscuits, which are very simple and wholesome, may be made with the same dough as good white bread, with the addition of from half to a whole ounce of butter to the pound kneaded into it after it has risen. Break the butter small, spread out the dough a little, knead it in well and equally, and leave it for about half an hour; then roll it a quarter of an inch thick; prick it well all over; cut out the biscuits; and bake them in a moderate oven from ten to fifteen minutes: they should be crisp quite through, but not deeply coloured.

White-bread dough, 2 lbs.; butter, 1 to 2 ozs.: to rise $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. Baked in moderate oven 10 to 15 minutes.

Obs.—To make the biscuits by themselves, proceed as for Borden's bread; but use new milk for them, and work three ounces of butter into two pounds of flour before the yeast is added.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONFECTIONARY.

TO CLARIFY SUGAR.

It is an economy to use at once the very best sugar for confectionary in general, for when highly refined it needs little or no clarifying, even for the most delicate purposes; and the coarser kinds lose considerable weight in the process. Break it into large lumps, and put it into a very clean preserving-pan; measure for each pound a pint of spring water if it be intended for syrup, but less than half that quantity for candying or making barley-sugar. Beat first apart (but not to a strong froth), and afterwards with the water, about half the white of an egg for six pounds of sugar, unless it should be *very* common, when twice as much may be used. When they are well mixed, pour them over the sugar, and let it stand until it is nearly dissolved; then stir the whole thoroughly, and place it over a gentle fire, but do not disturb it after the scum begins to gather on the top; let it boil for five minutes, then take the pan from the fire, and when it has stood a couple of minutes clear off the scum entirely, with a skimmer; set the pan again over the fire, and when the sugar begins to boil throw in a little cold water, which has been reserved for the purpose from the quantity first measured, and repeat the skimming until the syrup is very clear; it may then be strained through a muslin, or a thin cloth, and put into a clean pan for further boiling.

For syrup: sugar, 6 lbs.; water, 3 quarts; $\frac{1}{2}$ white of 1 egg. For candying, &c.: sugar, 6 lbs.; water, $2\frac{1}{2}$ pints: 5 to 10 minutes.

TO BOIL SUGAR FROM SYRUP TO CANDY, OR TO CARAMEL.

The technicalities by which confectioners distinguish the different degrees of sugar-boiling, seem to us calculated rather to puzzle than to assist the reader; and we shall, therefore, confine ourselves to such plain English terms as may suffice, we hope, to explain them. After having boiled a certain time, the length of which will in a measure depend upon the quality of the sugar as well as the quantity of water added, it becomes a thin syrup, and it will scarcely form a short thread if a drop be pressed between the thumb and finger and they are then drawn apart; from five to ten minutes more of rapid boiling will bring it to a *thick* syrup, and when this degree is reached the thread may be drawn from one hand to the other at some length without breaking; but its appearance in dropping from the skimmer will perhaps best denote its being at this point, as it hangs in a sort of string as it falls. After this the sugar will soon begin to whiten, and to form large bubbles in the pan, when, if it be intended for barley-sugar, or caramel, some lemon-juice or other acid must be added to it, to prevent its *graining* or *becoming sugar again*; but if wanted to candy, it must be stirred without ceasing, until it rises almost to the top of the pan, in one large white mass, when it must be used immediately or ladled out into paper cases or on to dishes, with the utmost expedition, as it passes in an instant almost from this state to one in which it forms a sort of powder, which will render it necessary to add water, to stir it until dissolved, and to reboil it to the proper point. For barley-sugar likewise it must be constantly stirred, and carefully watched after the lemon-juice is added. A small quantity should be dropped from time to time into a large basin of cold water by those who are inexperienced in the process; when in falling into this it makes a bubbling noise, and if taken out immediately after it snaps clean between the teeth without sticking to them, it must be poured out *instantly*: if wanted for sugar-spinning, the pan must be plunged as quickly as possible into a vessel of cold water.

BARLEY-SUGAR.

Add to three pounds of highly-refined sugar one pint and a quarter of spring water, with sufficient white of egg to clarify it in the manner directed in the last receipt but one: pour to it, when it begins to whiten and to be very thick, a dessertspoonful of the strained juice of a fresh lemon; and boil it quickly till it is at the point which we have indicated above. A few drops of essence of lemon may be added to it, just as it is taken from the fire. Pour it on to a marble slab, or on to a shallow dish which has been slightly oiled, or rubbed with a *morsel* of fresh butter; and when it begins to harden at the edges, form it into sticks, lozenges, balls, or any other shapes at pleasure. While it is still liquid it may be used for various purposes, such as Chantilly baskets, palace bonbons, *des croques-en-bouches*,* *cerises au caramel*, &c.: for these the vessel containing it must be set into a pan of water, and it

*These are formed of small cakes, roasted chestnuts, and various other things, just dipped singly into the barley-sugar, and then arranged in good form and joined in a mould, from which they are turned out for table.

must again be liquefied with a very gentle degree of heat should it cool too quickly. As it soon dissolves if exposed to damp, it should be put into very dry canisters as soon as it is cold, and these should be kept in a dry place.

Best sugar, 3 lbs.; water, 1½ pint; white of egg, ¼ of 1; lemon-juice, 1 dessertspoonful.

GINGER CANDY.

Break a pound of highly-refined sugar into lumps, put it into a preserving-pan, and pour over it about the third of a pint of spring water: let it stand until the sugar is nearly dissolved, then set it over a perfectly clear fire, and boil it until it becomes a thin syrup. Have ready in a large cup a teaspoonful of the very best ginger in powder, mix it smoothly and gradually with two or three spoonfuls of the syrup, and then stir it well into the whole. Watch the mixture carefully, keep it stirred, and drop it often from a spoon to ascertain the exact point of boiling it has reached. When it begins to fall in *flakes*, throw in the freshly-grated rind of a very large lemon, or of two small ones, and work the sugar round quickly as it is added. The candy must now be stirred constantly until it is done: this will be when it falls in a mass from the spoon, and does not *sink* when placed in a small heap on a dish. It must be poured, or *laded* out, as expeditiously as possible when ready, or it will fall quite into powder. If this should happen, a little water must be added to it, and it must be reboiled to the proper point. The candy, if dropped in cakes upon cold dishes, may be moved off without difficulty before it is thoroughly cold, but must not be touched while quite hot or it will break.

Sugar, highly refined, 1 lb.; water, ¼ of a pint; ginger, 1 teaspoonful; rind of 1 large lemon.

ORANGE-FLOWER CANDY.

Beat in three quarters of a pint, or rather more, of water, about the fourth part of the white of an egg; and pour it on two pounds of the best sugar broken into lumps. When it has stood a little time, place it over a very clear fire, and let it boil for a few minutes, then set it on one side, until the scum has subsided; clear it off, and boil the sugar till it is very thick, then strew in by degrees three ounces of the *petals* of the orange-blossom, weighed after they are picked from their stems. Continue to stir the candy until it rises in one white mass in the pan, then pour it into small paper cases, or on to dishes, and follow for it precisely the same directions as are given for the ginger-candy in the preceding receipt. The orange-flowers will turn brown if thrown too soon into the syrup: it should be more than three parts boiled when they are added. They must be gathered on the day they are wanted for use, as they become soon discoloured from keeping.

Sugar, 2 lbs.; water, ¾ pint; ¼ white of egg; orange-blossoms, 3 ozs.

ORANGE-FLOWER CANDY; (*another Receipt.*)

The French, who are very fond of the delicious flavour of the orange-blossom, leave the petals in the candy; but a more delicate confection, to English taste, is made as follows:—Throw the orange-flowers into the syrup when it has boiled about ten minutes, and after they have simmered in it for five more, pour the whole out, and leave them to in-

fuse until the following day, or even longer, if more convenient; then bring the syrup to the point of boiling, strain it from the blossoms through a muslin, and finish it by the foregoing receipt.

PALACE-BONBONS.

Take some fine fresh candied orange or lemon-peel, take off the sugar that adheres to it, cut it into inch-squares, stick these singly on the prong of a silver fork, or on osier-twigs, dip them into liquid barley-sugar, and place them on a dish rubbed with the smallest possible quantity of very pure salad oil. When cold, put them into tin boxes or canisters well dried, with paper between each layer.

EVERTON TOFFIE.

Put into a brass skillet, if at hand, three ounces of very fresh butter, and as soon as it is just melted add a pound of brown sugar of moderate quality; keep these stirred gently over a very clear fire for about fifteen minutes, or until a little of the mixture, dropped into a basin of cold water, breaks clean between the teeth without sticking to them: when it is boiled to this point, it must be poured out immediately, or it will burn. The grated rind of a lemon, added when the toffee is half done, improves it much; or a small teaspoonful of powdered ginger, moistened with a little of the other ingredients, as soon as the sugar is dissolved, and then stirred to the whole, will vary it pleasantly to many tastes. The real Everton toffee is made, we apprehend, with a much larger proportion of butter, but it is the less wholesome on that very account. If dropped upon dishes first rubbed with a buttered paper, the toffee when cold can be raised from them easily.

Butter, 3 ozs.; sugar, 1 lb.: 15 to 18 minutes.

TOFFIE. (ANOTHER WAY.)

Boil together a pound of sugar and five ounces of butter for twenty minutes; then stir in two ounces of almonds blanched, divided, and thoroughly dried in a slow oven, or before the fire. Let the toffee boil after they are added, till it crackles when dropped into cold water, and snaps between the teeth without sticking.

Sugar, 1 lb.; butter, 5 ozs.; almonds, 2 ozs.: 20 to 30 minutes.

CHAPTER XXV.

DESSERT DISHES.

MÉLANGE OF FRUIT.

HEAP a dessert-dish quite high with alternate layers of fine fresh strawberries stripped from the stalks, white and red currants, and white or red raspberries; strew each layer plentifully with sifted sugar, and just before the dish is sent to table, pour equally over the top a glass and a half of brandy, or, if preferred, the same quantity or rather more of white wine, mixed with the strained juice of one small, or of half a large lemon. Currants by themselves are excellent prepared in this