



APPLES ARE PLENTIFUL

AND they all lived appley ever afterwards" as the old fairy tales say! At any rate, we are fortunate this year in being able to "live appley," for this wholesome and delicious fruit is very plentiful and cheap, and we shall do well to make the most of it.

We start with a good method of storing raw apples for use in winter. It was sent to me by "Blossom," of Auckland:

To Store Apples

The best way is to gather the fruit and lay it on a clean shelf, and leave it there to sweat and dry. Then wrap each apple separately in tissue paper. Next put one inch of clean and perfectly-dry chaff in the bottom of a box for the fruit to rest on. Lay each apple separately, and cover with chaff—about one inch of covering with be necessary. The idea in doing this is to give the apples perfect isolation from each other, and keep the air excluded from all, with, at the same time, uniform temperature. Taint and contamination through decay is practically prevented. The box must be stored in a cool place, and care must be taken to see that the fruit is unblemished before storing.

Vinegar From Sour Apples

Cut up some sour apples, and place them in a large tub. They will shortly begin to ferment; then add some water, which they will soon absorb. Keep adding, day by day, as much water as they will absorb. At the end of a month, strain off the liquor into a cask. To every gallon of liquor, allow a pint of vinegar. Boil the vinegar, and reduce it by half, so that now you have half a pint of hot vinegar to every gallon of liquor. Add this while still hot, and let it remain for six weeks, when you will have an excellent vinegar.

Sausages With Apples

This is a Flemish recipe. Not only sausages, but lamb cutlets, or even mutton chops, may be served this way, which is merely to fry or grill, or even bake the meat, and serve it on a deep bed of warm apple sauce. Properly speaking, the apples for this should be stewed in red or white wine, with a good handful of sultanas, a pinch of cinnamon and some brown sugar. You could use the sultanas and spice without the wine, however; or have the apple sauce plain and homely.

Apple Sandwich (with yeast)

This can be used as a pudding or as a tea cake—it is a real "cut and come again." The pastry is unusual and delicious, being made with compressed yeast instead of baking powder. The ingredients are—half a pound of warmed flour, 3 ounces of melted butter, a pinch of salt, a dessertspoon of compressed yeast (bought at the grocer's for 4d per cake); a dessertspoon of sugar, 2 tablespoons of warm milk; 1 egg slightly beaten. Mix the sugar and yeast together in a small basin till they liquefy. (This is called

"creaming the yeast"). Put the warm flour and salt into a basin, make a well in the centre, and put in the creamed yeast, then the melted butter, the egg, and the milk, and mix well with a wooden spoon, to a soft "cake dough." It may be necessary to add a little more milk—do not have it too stiff. Set this "sponge," covered over with clean cloth and a warm, woolly cover or blanket, in a warm place (a hot water cupboard, perhaps), until it has risen to twice its size. It will get quite spongy and light; it will take approximately 3 hours, and should not be hurried. When ready, roll out the risen pastry and divide into two, as for shortcake. Put one half on the scone tray, or line a shallow tin with it; brush this over plentifully with melted butter, and then cover with a thick layer of sliced apples—about 1½ pounds of apples for this quantity of yeast. Sprinkle plenty of sugar and a little nutmeg or ground cinnamon among the apples, and press up the edges of the crust to hold them in, if you are using the scone tray. Then cover with the other piece of dough, first well brushed over with plenty more melted butter, if you can spare it, as this makes the cake extra luscious. Then glaze the outside with a little egg or butter before baking it. Sprinkle with icing sugar, and mark it lightly with a knife. Have the oven previously heated at Regulo 6 or about 400deg., and bake at the top of the oven. When brown, turn the Regulo to 5, or put the cake lower down. It should take a good half hour to cook.

Tenterden Apple Pie

This is a Kent and Sussex dish.

Peel, core and cut the apples into thick slices. Place a layer in a piedish. Sprinkle on a spoonful of sugar, then some more fruit and sugar, and a few cloves. Pour on half a cup of water. If you do not like the whole cloves, you could add a few drops of clove essence to the water. Cut some thin slices of cheese, and lay on the apples before putting on the crust. Sprinkle with the merest suggestion of pepper, a little nutmeg, and half a teaspoonful of castor sugar. Then roll out the pastry, put a strip round the edge of the dish, then the pastry top. Raise the edges slightly with a knife, sprinkle on a little castor sugar, and bake in a good oven for forty or fifty minutes.

Apple Bread

A very pleasant bread is made by a mixture of apples and flour in the proportion of 1 pound of apples to 2 pounds

of flour. The usual quantity of yeast is required as in making ordinary bread, and is mixed with the flour and the warm apple pulp (after the apples have been cooked). The dough is allowed to rise for three or four hours. Then put it into long tins and bake in a moderate oven for 1 to 1¼ hours. Very little water is needed; if the apples are very fresh, you may not need any.

Pickled Apples

There are at least two recipes for pickling apples.

First—peel and quarter the apples, weigh them, place them in a dish, cover with vinegar, and stand overnight. Next morning, pour off the vinegar, put it into a preserving pan with sugar (the sugar is equal in weight to the apples), and a few cloves, or clove essence. Bring to the boil, add the apples, and simmer gently till tender. Bottle hot. When cold, the apples are set in a nice firm jelly.

The second recipe was given to me by a very dainty cook—a Wellington lady, whose hobby is cooking.

For seven pounds of apples you need 3lb. of sugar, and one quart of vinegar. Put in a muslin bag 1 ounce of allspice, 1 ounce of cloves, and 1 ounce of whole ginger, broken. Make a syrup of the sugar, vinegar and spices, and when boiling, drop in the apples, and allow them to boil until they are fairly soft, but with the skin whole, and not broken. The lady writes: "I have always used small apples about 1¾ to 2in. in diameter. Leave the stalks on the apples, and when cooked place in an earthenware jar, and tie down. The jar need not be kept airtight. These are ready for immediate use, but improve if kept a little while. Serve them with their stalks on—they look quite unique, and are very lovely with cold meat."

Apple Curranty (Baked or Boiled)

This is also called "Apple In-and-Out." It is a real old Devonshire dish. Chop up 4 or 5 large sour cooking apples in pieces the size of lump sugar; and chop half a pound of suet very fine. It would be easier to use shredded suet. Put into a basin ¾lb. of flour, and 1½ small teaspoons of baking powder, and blend with the suet, 2 tablespoons of sugar, and a pinch of salt. Add the chopped apples, and 3 tablespoons of currants or sultanas, and mix together with 1 egg and just sufficient milk to make it of cake consistency. Bake the mixture for an hour in a greased pie dish, or, if preferred, put the mixture in a greased basin, cover with greaseproof paper, and boil for 2½ hours.

Whether baked or boiled, it should be served with real Devonshire cream—or at a pinch, ordinary cream.

FROM THE MAIL BAG

Birds' Nests

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I heard you read a letter from someone who wants a recipe for Birds' Nests Cakes. I had the following one, so I thought I would send it to you.

The ingredients for the sponge-cake part are 2 eggs; 3 ounces of sugar; 2½ ounces of flour, and a bare half teaspoon of baking powder. The mixture for the eggs is made with 1½ ounces of almonds; 3 ounces of castor sugar or icing sugar; 1 small egg (use as required); some jam and a little browned coconut.

Make the cakes as follows: Whisk the eggs and sugar till very thick. Rub the flour and baking powder through a sieve, and lightly fold it into the flour and castor sugar, and pour the sponge into this. Bake in a moderate oven for fifteen to twenty minutes, or till cooked. Allow to cool. Cut the sponge into small rounds, and cut out a smaller round from the top of each to represent the nest. Brush the sponge with hot jam, and roll it in the browned coconut, to make it more "nest-like." To make the eggs, mix the almonds and sugar to a very stiff paste with beaten egg, work in a little colouring to part of this, and roll in the fingers into tiny eggs. Put these into the nests. Serve on green doilies to represent leaves. They are very pretty little cakes.

Would you also tell me if it is possible to whiten a silk shawl, which has gone quite yellow with age? It is about one hundred years old, and I was wondering if it could be whitened at all.—"Helen" (Kilbirnie).

Very many thanks indeed for the recipe. The cakes must be very nice for a children's party—quite realistic. About your shawl, I really do not think it could be made white again, as it is so very old. You could try equal parts of French Chalk and borax, mixed thoroughly together. Spread out the shawl on a folded sheet or white tablecloth, and spread the powder over it thickly. Roll it up and leave it for a few days. Then shake and brush it gently. It may be better, and can be no worse, at least. I should be afraid to wash it, in case it fell to pieces. Otherwise, it could be gently squeezed and soaked in soft, lukewarm water, containing a little borax, and some soap-flakes; rinsing afterwards in water to which a little peroxide has been added. Roll up in a dry towel, without wringing, and iron with a cool iron. A little blue in the

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