



SOME AMERICAN RECIPES

FOR some years past, we have been very interested in American cooking and American food in general. They were probably the first people to take seriously the subject of food values and balanced meals, and they have managed to achieve their characteristic efficiency in this direction without sacrificing their delicious national dishes such as fried chicken, hamburgers, creamed left-overs, baked beans, and, of course, pie! Those lovely American pies — lemon pie, butterscotch pie, pumpkin pie, huckleberry pie — an almost endless variety, rich (but not indigestible), and luscious, with a crisp meringue top. One of our soldiers overseas wrote me on this subject. He said "We thrilled to the food in Halifax. There is one dish there that they excel in, butterscotch pie. It is beyond description. Thin pastry and one inch of this butterscotch! Food for the gods! You should get the recipe and broadcast it to New Zealand women. It is the discovery of the century, especially the thin layer of pastry on top and sides."

Well, of course, butterscotch pie is well known in New Zealand, and was very popular about 20 years ago. I am told, however, that our filling mixture is really more a caramel custard than a "butterscotch." And evidently my soldier's pie had a pastry top instead of meringue. So any of the Daisy Chain who may have had letters from their soldiers on this subject, are invited to send us their information.

Here, then, are some American recipes, long popular "over there":

Southern Fried Chicken

Young chickens, about 2½ lbs. each. Cut them up into joints; roll these in seasoned flour. In a deep frying or stew pan fry some bacon slices until there is plenty of bacon fat in the pan. Remove the bacon and add ¼ to ½ lb. of butter, make very hot, and put in the floured joints. Cook slowly in the hot fat, turning frequently, till the chicken is well browned and cooked. Then lift the joints on to a hot dish, and keep very hot, while you add the bacon and 1½ cups of milk to the fat in the pan. Stir thoroughly and let simmer slowly for 15 minutes. Then pour this over the chicken, add sprigs of parsley and serve. In this recipe the gravy is not thickened with flour or cornflour, but probably most of us would like to thicken it a little, even at the expense of tradition. I should think we could use this method for cooking young rabbits, too. When I gave the recipe for Chicken Hawaiian, many people used rabbit instead, and found it splendid. We cannot do Chicken Hawaiian just at present, because of the shortage of pineapple.

Chicken California (Economical)

Joint the chickens and dredge with seasoned flour. Rub round a frying pan with a clove of garlic. This will give

sufficient flavour to the chicken, which is then browned in this pan in 2 or 3 tablespoons of hot butter or good dripping, preferably bacon fat. Then transfer the joints to your baking dish, pour 2 cups of milk around, and bake in a hot oven. The gravy may be thickened according to taste. If you have one of the new casseroles which can be stood over a flame, as well as used in the oven, you can use it, and afterwards bring it to the table, thus saving washing up.

Candied Sweet Potatoes (American)

Choose medium-sized sweet potatoes, scrub thoroughly and cook in boiling water till tender. Strain, dry and skin. Cut the potatoes lengthwise, and put into a greased shallow casserole or pie-dish. Pour over them a syrup made by boiling two-thirds cup of brown sugar, one-third cup of water, and 2 tablespoons of butter together for about 2 minutes. Bake in a very hot oven, basting occasionally until lightly browned. Serve with chicken or ham.

Sweet Fried Potatoes

If you cannot get kumaras, try boiling small ordinary potatoes whole, in the skins. Strain and peel them as above. Melt a good large piece of butter in a frying pan, stir in some sugar, and when nicely brown, fry the potatoes in it—whole if possible. If you cannot get small potatoes, shape the large ones into small balls. This is really a Danish recipe.

Baked Beans

In the real recipe for Boston Baked Beans, they have to be baked in a moderate oven for 8 hours! This is

sometimes impracticable on account of using so much fuel. At the same time, with a regulo-controlled oven set to its very lowest, or an electric stove with the top element off and the bottom set to low, the cost would not be very great, and one could cook something else in the oven at the same time. It is definitely the long, slow baking which gives the true flavour. In many country houses the kitchen stove is kept going all day long in the winter time, and so the oven is always hot. However, if you cannot use the oven for so long, you may boil your beans first till tender, then put them into your casserole (or any deep oven jar with a tight-fitting lid), with the piece of pickled pork buried in the middle, and just showing above the beans, which have had a tablespoon or so of treacle mixed with them—and sufficient of the water in which they were boiled to keep all moist. Then bake in a moderate oven for an hour or two, taking off the lid for the last half hour, to brown the top of the pork and beans.

Butterscotch Pie

Here is a real American Butterscotch Pie, using three eggs. Half a cup of sugar, ¼ cup water, 4 tablespoons butter, 1¾ cup scalded milk, 3 egg yolks, 1 cup brown sugar, ¼ teaspoon salt, ½ cup cornflour, ¼ cup cold milk, 3 egg whites and 6 tablespoons sugar. Caramelize the half cup sugar. (I suppose this is done by melting it in a thick saucepan over heat, until brown but not burnt). When caramelised, add the water and butter. Allow to dissolve. Scald the milk and add to the caramel mixture. Beat egg yolks, add brown sugar, cornflour, salt, and cold milk. Add mixture to the hot milk, cook till thickened, stirring constantly after the mixture begins to thicken. Pour into baked pie shell, cover with meringue made of the egg whites and 6 tablespoons of sugar, and bake.



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