



## PRESERVING—Without Rubber Rings

**A**LTHOUGH some people may still have rubber rings for their preserving jars—either new or once used, which are not perished (be careful of this)—a majority will have to do their preserving without them. This is quite simple, and merely means returning to the methods of the pioneer settlers, whose fruit preserves were beautiful, both in colour and in flavour.

The two essential points in preserving are (1), to sterilise the fruit or vegetables properly, and (2), to see that a perfectly air-tight seal is applied immediately.

A perfect seal is made by having ready a saucepan full of very hot and clean melted fat—half mutton and half beef. When you take your jars of hot and sterilised fruit and syrup, one by

seam round the bottom of the tin is not leaking at all—some golden syrup tins do. Put fat round this seam if at all doubtful.

### Without Sugar

Pack the fruit carefully into jars, and put a tablespoon of sugar on top of the fruit. Fill up with boiled and cooled water. If you have no sugar at the moment, this small amount can be quite well omitted, but it does add to the flavour of the fruit. Put the lids loosely on (just to keep in the steam), and cook either in a cool oven (Regulo 1, or 250 degrees), or in a vessel of water—the water need only come half way up the jars if the vessel has a cover, either fitting or improvised. Cook until the fruit is soft, but not broken. Take out jars one by one sealing each immediately, while boiling hot, with three-quarters of an inch of hot beef and mutton fat (half and half) as described above. Paste over at once with 2 thicknesses of paper covered well with flour and water paste.

### Substitute for Golden Syrup

*Melt a little sugar—half the quantity required in the recipe—in a small saucepan. When it is a deep golden colour, add a little very hot water. This has been used successfully in "Ship's Cake."*

one, from the oven or the water-bath, you must immediately pour on at least half an inch of the hot fat. Some people put the fat in with a tablespoon and when it has cooled, they make assurance doubly sure by adding another spoonful or two of cool, melted fat, just in case it may have shrunk at all in setting. Actually, this fat does not shrink away from the sides of the jar as prepared waxes often do. Then cover the top of the jars with kitchen paper or notepaper well coated with ordinary flour and water paste, which helps to keep the paper air-tight. Let the paper come well down the sides of the jar.

One of the best known Links in our Daisy Chain has always remained true to this method of sealing preserved fruit, instead of changing over to the screw-top and rubber-ring. She found it so simple and so safe. As a test, she refrained from opening a bottle of peaches for five years, then staged a little "opening ceremony" for a modern friend who used only the most up-to-date jars. The friend had to admit the perfection of the preserve.

The fat lifts off in a clean and solid piece, and the fruit is in perfect condition.

### Tins

Golden syrup tins (or any tins with press-in lids) are used successfully for preserving fruit, provided they are not bent or cracked, and are perfectly clean. In this case, you need not use the hot fat for sealing; just overflow with boiling water or syrup, press in the lid hard and then pour hot fat or hot water over the whole top of the tin. See that the

## FROM THE MAIL BAG

### Nice Mice

Dear Aunt Daisy,

We nearly all have to help get up children's parties at holiday time, so I thought I would send you this idea for little "novelty" cakes—"Mice Cakes" I call them.

Just make the ordinary meringue recipe, but shape each meringue into a "mouse" with one end pointed for the nose, and the other end thick. For the tails cut those penny liquorice strips into fine lengths, and stick them on, and also put wee dobs of the liquorice for eyes, and more little bits for the ears. You can have the meringue mixture white, or pale pink, or chocolate-coloured. These are lovely, and look so nice when finished.

*Another method:* I have also seen a child's birthday cake iced with white icing all over, and "mice" arranged all round the top with their tails dangling down around the sides of the cake. In this case, however, the mice consisted of well-cooked and drained prunes (the larger ones)—with long liquorice tails, and little dobs of cheese for eyes and ears this time, and a piece of cheese in the centre of the cake, to attract the mice.

I hope the Daisy Chain will like this idea.—T.O.L. (Remuera).

*Splendid. The eyes could also be made with pink bits out of liquorice all sorts, or pink or silver cachous. It would be fun to put a "mouse" or two here and there on the table, too.*



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