A COLLATION OF CAKES
YESTERDAY AND TODAY

In which is included a true and accurate notation of Early English and Colonial American Receipts, showing the beginning and progress of the Gentle Art of Cake Making to the present time

By
CLAUDIA QUIGLEY MURPHY

Author of
Bread—The Vital Food
Cocoa—Nature’s Choicest Gift
Art of Writing
Art of Table Setting

To be used in the Class Room for the teaching of culinary art, as well as in Home Demonstration Work, Women’s Clubs, etc.

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To the Women of Our Homes—
Our Mothers and Daughters

“He is an alien, a meer stranger that hath not been acquainted with your generous House-keepings.”
Robert May—1678

To the housekeepers and home makers, teachers of cookery and their students, who so earnestly and devotedly, with Diligence and Consecration, carry forward the splendid art and skill in cookery, for the well-being of our homes and the pro-
motion of happiness and content in our family life; as well as in recognition of the Admired Hospitality of the homes of this Nation, this monograph for the development and promotion of the Gentle Art of Cake Making is inscribed by

Your
Most Humble Servant

Claudia Q. Murphy

New York City
January, 1923
THE finishing touch in the technique of a perfect housekeeper and home maker is her fine skill in making cake, light biscuits, muffins, etc., for cookery is an accomplishment as well as a very choice and most satisfying art, and need never be drudgery unless one chooses to make it so. Unless one can apply the art of cookery, and prove an actual skill in making delicious cake, pastry and other viands, there is a lack of efficient administration of the household with its natural sequence of an unhappy, discontented family.

Naturally, the prompt delivery of grocery orders, and the instant placing on pantry shelves of foreign and domestic food stuffs, misleads to the belief that this useful service and quick distribution of food products has always existed. Not so—centuries of time developing these methods, and endless travel in searching for domestic and foreign products is included in the service of food stuffs in the grocer’s basket.

The art of making cake, biscuits, and pastry passed through an age of infancy and did not arrive at its present maturity but by very slow degrees, with constant experiments carried over a long period of time. Methods of measuring oven heat in the Seventeenth century were simple but effective, if the heat in the oven was excessive, it scorched the inquiring hand. The matter of time for the duration of baking was, in Elisabethan times, indicated by “the time in which you would repeat a

[‘Miserere’]
‘Miserere’ slowly,” or the time of saying an “Ave Maria” or the “Pater Noster”;—this from Thornbury’s *Shakespeare’s England*, intimating a closer acquaintance with formal prayer than exists today. It has actually required over three hundred years to bring the Gentle Art of Cake Making to its present perfection.

Beginning with feudal days, when the extent of hospitality was the limit of the castle walls, companionship and good cookery developed together; hand in hand, side by side, they have come down the gallery of years in company, for as life became safer and living something more than a series of alarums, neighbor became acquainted with neighbor and more socialized living became possible. Then ended the feudal days and there entered the days of merry feasts and formal banquets as an outward expression of the safer and more delightful living.

Though they were mighty trencher-men and women in those earlier periods, they were never gluttons as in those days of Rome when

> "Old Lucullus, they say
> "Forty cooks had each day
> "And Vitellius’ meals cost a million."

but rather an age that recognized good fellowship as well as the added palatability, flavor and appearance of properly cooked food, and the comfort and satisfaction of well served, orderly meals.

The menu’s of the Elisabethan period, down to and through the period of good Queen Anne, and up through the four Georges, were long, abundant and generous. Meat and poultry, fish and wild fowl were present in abundance; vegetables for cooking were few; potatoes yet undiscovered for common every day use. “Sallads and Sallets” there were in profusion including grand salads, cooked salads and simple salads of fresh vegetables; meat pyes in constant use, puddings in myriad forms; bread in terms of Cheat for peasants, Raveled

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Cheat for Merchants, Manchets for the gentry, made into small loaves weighing less than half a pound and always marked with a cross. For trencher service the large round loaves were baked, and frequently the thick slices of bread served in lieu of plates.

Cake was a later production but cakes were made before the days of Shakespeare, who must have been familiar with them, for we read in A COMEDY OF ERRORS, Act III, Sc. 1:

"Your cake is warm within"

a statement showing that then as now, nice, warm, freshly baked cakes were liked, but alas! then as now, there were occasions on which the baking was not the desired success but rather a dismal and sorry failure, for in THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, Gremio laments:

"Our cake's dough on both sides."

One cause of uncertainty in the cakes of the early days of cake and pastry making was the somewhat superficial and sketchy way of writing the receipt. In the direction "To Make Spice Cakes," which is one of the earliest printed receipts for cake, the quantity of the ingredients is not exact and there is a lack of precision in fixing the bulk of the materials that is interesting, especially the method of "hurleing" the currants in the batter—how many is not stated. Here is the receipt as printed three hundred years ago in COUNTREY CONTENTMENTS: or THE ENGLISH HOUSEWIFE by G. M.—London, 1623; in the very year when the Dutch pioneers were landing at the mouth of the Hudson River to found the city which is now New York.

"TO MAKE SPICE CAKES.

"To make excellent spice cakes, take halfe a pecke of very fine Wheat-flower, take almost one pound of sweet butter, and some good milke and creame mixt together, set it on the fire, and put in your butter, and a good deale of sugar, and let it melt together; then straine Saffron into your milke a good quantity; then take
"seven or eight spoonful of good Ale barme, and eight
egges with two yelkes and mix them together, then put
your milke to it when it is somewhat cold, and into
your flower put salt, Aniseedes bruised, Cloves and
Mace, and a good deale of Cinamon: then worke all
together good and stiffe, that you need not worke in any
flower after; then put in a little rose water cold, then
rub it well in the thing you knead it in, and worke it
thoroughly: if it be not sweet enough, scrape in a little
more sugar, and pull it all in peeces, and hurle in a
good quantity of Currants, and so worke all together
againe, and bake your Cake as you see cause in a
gentle warme oven."

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, cake
was mostly bread dough, yeast raised, enriched with
eggs, sugar and fruit added. When flavor was desired
it was either of fruit, wine, spices, seeds or brandy.
The cake of the period was a mixture containing

"Sugar and Spice
And everything nice"

and was of large size, for the flour was measured by
the peck and the other ingredients by the pound, with
eggs frequently quoted in terms of the dozens. The
construction of a cake was a matter of great importance
and engaged the attention of the entire domestic house-
hold from the Yeoman of the Pantry down to the scullery
maids. Hours were spent in blending the sugar and
butter, for the sugar came in hunks and required ener-
getic maceration ere it could be blended with the butter
in the cold, windy kitchens of that period. To beat
the great mass of eggs was no small task, for two or
three dozen eggs were none too many to lighten the
batter to a consistency suitable for producing cake.

Early in the seventeenth century, Gervase Markham,
in his book of COUNTREY CONTENTMENTS, London 1623,
put down these requirements for a good cook:

"First, she must be cleanly, both in body and
garments; she must have a quick eye, a curious nose,

["a perfect]
"a perfect taste, and a ready ear. She must not be
"butter-fingered, sweet-toothed, nor faint-hearted; for
"the first will let everything fall, the second will con-
"sume what it should increase, and the last will lose
"time with too much niceness."

The most sought for receipt for cake in the days of
the Restoration, when the gay Charles II held court
with his Queen Catharine Braganza of Portugal, was
"the Countess of Rutland's receipt of making a rare
Banbury Cake, which was so much praised at her
daughter's (the Right Honorable Lady Chaworth's)
wedding." Here it stands as published in The Com-
plete Cook—London 1664:

"BANBURY CAKE.

"Take a peck of fine flour, and a half an ounce of
"large Mace, half an ounce of Nutmegs, and half an
"ounce of Cinnamon; your Cinnamon and Nutmegs
"must be sifted through a searce; two pounds of butter,
"half a score of eggs, put out four of the whites of them,
"something above a pint of good ale yeast; beat your eggs
"very well and strain them with your yeast and a little
"warm water into your flour, and stir them together, then
"put your butter cold in little lumps. The water you
"knead withall must be scalding hot, if you will make
"it good paste, the which having done, lay the paste
"to rise in a warm cloth a quarter of an hour or there-
"upon. Then put in ten pounds of Currans, and a little
"musk and ambergreece dissolved in Rosewater; your
"Currans must be made very dry, or else they will make
"the cake heavy; strew as much sugar finely beaten
"amongst the Currans, as you shall think the water has
"taken away the sweetness from them: Break the paste
"into little pieces into a Kimmell,* or such like thing
"and lay a layer of paste broken into little pieces, and
"a layer of Currans until your Currans are all put in,
"mingle the paste and the Currans very well but take
"heed of breaking the Currans, you must take out a piece
"of paste, after it hath risen in a warm cloth before you
"put in the Currans to cover the top and bottom, you must

* Kimmell—a large bowl or tub for kitchen service.
“roll the cover something thin, and the bottom likewise, 
“and wet it with Rosewater, and close them at the bottom 
“of the side, or the middle, which you like best, prick 
“the top and the sides with a small long pin; when your 
“Cake is ready to go into the Oven, cut it in the midst 
“of the side round about with a Knife an inch deep: if 
“your Cake be a peck of meal, it must stand two hours in 
“the Oven; your Oven must be as hot as for Manchet.”

The Nun's Cake

The choicest cake, as well as the only cake made without bread dough in the early days, was that called the Nun’s Cake. Its receipt seems to have been carefully cherished and handed down as a prized heritage from previous generations, doubtless in manuscript form, handwritten, bequeathed from mother to daughter, or, the ingredients memorized and passed along by word of mouth. Possibly its origin may have been in the splendid Whitby Abbey—that early home of highest culture and wisest living—from the day of Hilda the greatest of Abbesses, to whose portion fell the settling of many family quarrels and marital difficulties for friends, relations and neighbors. The Abbess was a woman of judgment, with a choice, discriminating insight into human frailties, for Shakespeare makes the Abbess in A COMEDY OF ERRORS say in excusing the unhappy husband to the accusing wife,

"Unquiet meals make ill digestions."

So she put the accused husband in prayerful retreat, with perhaps a wiser, quieting menu, realizing that good food, properly served, was one of the foundations of happiness. From the Abbeys of Europe came white bread and light cake, for the Abbess was a woman of gentle birth, usually of splendid family, and of highest culture.

The receipt for this highly prized cake appears in all of the early cookery books, with little variation of content or ingredients. Its preparation seemed almost a ritual. The incomparable Hannah Glasse, in her
Art of Cookery—London 1747, carefully prints the receipt, which is identical with the one offered by E. Smith in 1730 and so published in her Compleat Housewife in London of that date.

"THE NUN'S CAKE."

"You must take four pounds of the finest flour, and three pounds of double-refined sugar beaten and sifted; mix them together and dry them by the fire till you prepare your other materials. Take four "pounds of butter, beat it with your hand till it is soft like cream, then beat thirty-five eggs, leave "out sixteen whites, strain off your eggs from the "treads, and beat them and the butter together till "all appears like butter. Put in four or five spoon- "fuls of rose or orange-flower water, and beat again; "then take your flour and sugar, with six ounces of "carraway-seeds, and strew them in by degrees, "beating it up all the time for two hours together. You "may put in as much tincture of cinnamon or amber- "grease as you please; butter your hoop, and let it stand "three hours in a moderate oven. You must observe "always, in beating of butter, to do it with a cool hand "and beat it always one way in a deep earthen dish."

The making of rich, tender and flavory cake was progressing along definite and delicious lines, and always in the hands of women, for the Gentle Art of Cake Making is one of women's greatest contributions to Culinary Art. Strange as it may seem, men have never been successful as cake makers, and the art of cake making, so long as it is held in terms of choicest artistry, is woman's proud achievement and her gift to an appreciative posterity.

During the reign of William and Mary, cookery made great advance and cake making was the finest evidence of the forward movement. In the Royal Cookery Book of that period, published at the close of the seventeenth century, is read the cheery announcement:

*See modern version of receipt with working formula on page 29.

[""EXCELLENT"]
"EXCELLENT SMALL CAKES WHICH ARE MUCH ESTEEMED AT COURT.

"The King himself hath eat of them."

"Take 3 lbs. of very fine flour, 1 1/4 lbs. of butter and as much currants, and same of sugar; 7 eggs (one-half of the whites taken out) and knead all well together into a paste; a little nutmeg grated, and a little rose water; so make them up about the thickness of your hand, and bake them upon a plate of tin."

Queen Anne and her familiar and famous friend, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, loved good living, and fine cakes were their special delight, while the variety made and ingredients included gained quick recognition for the happy cook.

**Table Service**

Finer and more handsome table appointments began to be used in the homes of the rich and newly rich, for in that period began those luxurious standards of living and service that were accounted necessities in the days of the Georges who succeeded. Wealth followed the flag of commerce as it stretched from sea to sea, and with it came handsome table service, greater variety of foods as well as meticulous care and precision in the preparation of the viands of the day. Again, the increase of wealth gave an increase of leisure to those who attained or inherited sufficient means to justify their position as members of the leisure class. With the improvement of roadways and the betterment of vehicular travel, more frequent visits were made to relatives and friends; naturally comparisons of cookery, table service, and furnishings were made.

Receipts for cake were passed from lady to lady with impressive gesture as the finest touch of exquisite perfection in the making, such as: "wash the butter free of salt, and flavor it in a bath of rose water," and—the secret of secrets—"a dash of vinegar to the rose water gives piquancy to the flavor," and so it does.
The service of meals, varied and choice, came into fashion. The intimate family meals, the formal banquets, and finally the art of dining as a social event was developed with a ritual of procedures and a definite format of content. Definite regulations for dining were provided, such as suggesting that "guests be limited to twelve, that the conversation may be constantly general;" that "the guests' occupations be varied, their tastes similar;" "the room to be luxuriously lighted;" "the women pleasant without too much coquetry;" "the dishes choice but limited in number," and proceed with the hint, "Let the coffee be hot, and the tea not too strong, and the toast be scientifically buttered—all go home at eleven and in bed by twelve."*

To live well was a constant aim in domestic life and the production of choice cakes, tea biscuits and dainties, an exhibition of sound training in culinary art by mistress and maids that was not overlooked by either the happy guests or the devotees of social graces. Here developed that summing up phrase "they eat well" as the final token of correct standards of living, as well as an obvious manifestation of material wealth.

ON THE WEST COAST OF THE ATLANTIC

ON AMERICAN SHORES

The progress of culinary art in America is definite and of concrete achievement. We owe pan baking of bread to the sturdy and inventive pioneer mothers of America who brought their kitchen fittings from England. Over there were big bake ovens of brick, ready for the baking of the round loaves on the floor of the ovens, in the old vernacular—hearth bread. Here bricks were scarce, for there was little clay obtainable for brick making; certainly none along the bleak western shores of the broad Atlantic where our Pilgrim mothers landed. So the Pilgrim mothers—bless them—did their baking in either Dutch ovens of tin, set on the blazing hearth, facing the open fire, with a tin shield

* The Art of Dining—Hayward—London 1883. [to ward]
to ward off the flames; or in an iron kettle oven—sometimes also called Dutch—with squat legs and a depression on the cover in which hot coals could be placed to give a top heat so as to brown the dough, or rather the doughy batter, which was put in a tin pan to keep it clean and set inside the little oven to bake. Later, ovens were built in the chimney and gave most excellent baking service.

The early American cakes were sweetened with molasses fresh from the West Indies; fruit from Spain and Italy; raisins and currants from the Mediterranean, and spices from the Dutch Merchantmen helped to added flavor. Eggs were produced in abundance in the farm-yards, and flour was of home production. All that was needed to transform the raw materials into a delicious cake was the experience and skill of the housewife and that never seemed lacking. There was no higher evidence of good housekeeping in Colonial days than the production of a perfect, tasty, tender cake. And, happily, the shadow of the reputation of our foremothers in cake making, still lingers as a most potential influence in the housewifery of today. To say that the art of cake making is passing from the home to a commercialized industry, is to malign the American standard of home making and housewifery.

One of the earliest cookery books prepared on this side of the Atlantic was entitled:

**New American Cookery**

**or**

**Female Companion**

by An American Lady, published in New York City at 70 Vesey Street, in 1805, in which is offered this statement:

"Amongst the various arts which most essentially contribute to the gratification of the human species, there is none more deservedly worthy of attention than "Cookery; or the art of rendering a dish of victuals ["as palatable"]
“as palatable as possible will certainly be deemed of considerable importance to all.”

So the Lady provided a series of receipts, among them a

“CHEAP SEED CAKE.

“Rub one pound of sugar, half an ounce of alspice into four quarts of flour, into which pour one pound of butter melted, in one pint of milk, nine eggs, one "gill 'emptins' (caraway seeds and currants, or raisins if you please) make into two loaves, bake one and a half hours.”

“Emptins” being sometimes hop “emptins” or cornmeal; or from the brewery or baker; sometimes lees taken from cider; occasionally made from peach leaves, or any form of yeast that would leaven the loaf. This term—“emptins”—was in such common use in early days that it served in the popular Biglow Papers.

"'Twill take more emptins, by a long chalk
"To give such heavy cakes as these a start."

Another early cookery book that is very rare was American Cookery

or the art of dressing viands, etc., and the best mode of making all kinds of cakes, etc., adapted to this country and all grades of life, by an American Orphan, published in Battleboro, Vermont—1819. In this is offered a Plain Cake, and “emptins” appear here for leavening.

Pearlash was commonly used in ginger cakes, molasses cakes, and all cakes of that type. Milk too is used in many of the cakes, mostly sour milk which made a very tender product, soft and delicious and a very welcome departure from the solid cakes of sweetened bread dough that had previously been the fashion. Instead of the huge loaves of cake made to last a month or more, that had formerly been made, small cakes, fresh, flavorful, and frequently hot, were served instead—a most popular innovation.

Mistress Mary Randolph in 1828 wrote The Virginia Housewife, with the slogan Method is the Soul of Management.
Management—and put it out from her home in Richmond, Virginia. In her preface she writes:

"Management is an art that may be acquired by every woman of good sense and tolerable memory. If, perchance, she has been bred in a family where domestic business is the work of chance, she will have many difficulties to encounter; but a determined resolution to obtain this valuable knowledge will enable her to surmount all obstacles. She must begin the day with an early breakfast, requiring each person to be in readiness to take their seats when the muffins, buckwheat cakes, etc., are placed on the table. This looks social and comfortable."

And social and comfortable it reads. Mistress Randolph uses Pearlash—three teaspoons dissolved in a cup of water—in her "Plebeian Ginger Bread."

Miss Leslie, of Philadelphia, for so her signature always reads, prepared her book of SEVENTY-FIVE RECEIPTS in 1827 in Boston. Pearlash is a requisite for many of her cakes. In Miss Leslie’s Dover Cake she dissolves her “half-teaspoon of pearlash in a little vinegar,” but warns that “the pearlash will give it a dark color.” In her revised book, published in Philadelphia some thirty years later, bicarbonate of soda appears as a leavening agent, which she sometimes calls “sub-carbonate of soda."

Following Miss Leslie’s receipt book came THE AMERICAN FRUGAL HOUSEWIFE, “dedicated to those who are not ashamed of economy.” Its date of publication is 1835 and the place Boston, Massachusetts. Here pearlash is used in the majority of receipts for cakes, small cakes, doughnuts, and pancakes. Of this book Mrs. Child was the author.

Following the use of pearlash came saleratus. The use of this leavening confined one to the use of sour milk to furnish the essential acid, and it was most popular. Cake making had come to stay, and the modern standards of cake making were constantly im-
proving. The objections to soda or saleratus were the yellow color of the product, the coarse grain of the cake, as well as the persistent and alas, too frequent acrid taste of the soda. This is one way of preparing saleratus:

"TO PREPARE SALERATUS FOR CAKE.

"Take one-quarter pound of saleratus, put it into a pint bottle, which fill with water; shake it well, and after remaining a sufficient length of time to settle, it will be fit for use.

"If tightly corked, this will keep a long time, and when more than half used, the bottle may be refilled with water."

PRACTICAL RECEIPTS FOR THE HOUSEWIFE
By Hannah Widdifield, Published 1856—Philadelphia.

Then entered soda and cream of tartar which was advocated in The Practical American Cook Book, by A Housekeeper, New York, 1855, as a portable yeast. Speaking of its value the author says: "This bread is easily made, requires little labor, no kneading or time for dough to rise. Its dietetical properties are of the utmost importance."

But to blend cream of tartar and soda is not easy, even for the most experienced, and there was need for careful skill and rare judgment to get the proportions correct, and this done, carefully, cautiously, and prayerfully, cakes would go wrong, no one knew why. The usual method reads this way in Practical Cooking and Dinner Giving, by Mrs. Mary F. Henderson, published 1876 in New York:

"SODA AND CREAM OF TARTAR BISCUITS.

"Ingredients: One quart of flour, one teaspoonful of soda, two teaspoonfuls cream of tartar, one even teaspoonful of salt, lard or butter the size of a small egg, and milk.

"Put the soda, cream of tartar and salt on the table; mash them smoothly with a knife, and mix well to-
“Gather; mix them as evenly in the flour as possible; then pass it all through a sieve two or three times. The success of the biscuits depends upon the equal distribution of these ingredients. Mix in the lard or butter (melted) as evenly as possible, taking time to rub it between the open hands to break any little lumps. Now pour in enough milk to make the dough consistent enough to roll out, mixing it lightly with the ends of the fingers. The quicker it is rolled out, cut and baked, the better will be the biscuits.”

The cakes of cream of tartar and soda were distinctly an advance in cake making practice; tender in crumb, delicate in texture, and choice and incomparably delicious in flavor, they were instantly voted a superlative success. Even though it was a bit difficult to get just the nice balance in the two chemicals that would give the desired effect of lightness and whiteness, the cake was so much better in flavor, color, and form as well as taste, that it was well worth the effort made to produce it. Verily—the Gentle Art of Cake Making.

In 1881, Mary Stuart Smith published in Harper’s Franklin Square Library her Virginia Cookery Book which was at that time the quintessence of fine and choice receipts. From it is offered:

“REPUBLICAN CAKE.

“Five eggs, three-quarters of a pound of sugar, one pound of flour, half a pound of butter, one teaspoon of soda, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar, one cup of sweet milk; first beat the eggs, whites and yolks separately; add the sugar to the yolks when light, and beat again; then add the butter after washing the salt from it and creaming it, then the cup of milk and whites of eggs. The flour should be added last, the soda and cream of tartar having been perfectly incorporated with it in sifting. Let the process of making be as prompt as possible, and bake in a quick steady oven.”

Doubtless Republican Cake or its savoury equivalent [appeared]
appeared on the supper table, delicate and delicious, fine in texture and handsome in appearance, set with pride by the maker on the cherished glass stand or silver cake basket, and served daintily on the little blue china plates of Willow pattern, so well described in the little rhyme:

"Two birds flying high
"A little vessel sailing by
"A bridge with two men on or more
"A weeping willow hanging o'er
"The King's Castle here it stands
"The finest building in the land
"An H'apple tree with H'apples on it
"And here's a fence to
"End my sonnet."

Cream of tartar and soda being the preferred ingredients for a leavening or rising powder, and the preference being arrived at by many years of experience, it was natural that commercial enterprise should undertake to prepare by careful measure and exact rule, the skillful blending of a compound that was perfect in proportions and always ready for instant use. Out of all the trials of the preceding years in the production of leavenings for home baking, this new rising powder was christened "baking powder" for the delighted use of American housekeepers.

Baking powder was produced as the result of a need for a convenient leavening powder that could be used with sweet milk or water and would give a nice, fine grained, sweet tasting and tender cake or light biscuit or pastry. It certainly brought in its little tin box much good eating, delicious biscuit for tea or breakfast, for luncheon or dinner; the light fluffy dumpling to add to the savoury stew of meat or poultry; the colorful, popular and appetizing pancake; the poppy popover; the attractive and tasty muffins and gems for early or late breakfast; and finally, a whole range of choice cakes, cookies, and pastries—all these are contained
in the can of baking powder, a very definite reason for its preference and popularity by the women in the home and the men of the family who like good wholesome baking products.

WHAT CHEMISTRY HAS CONTRIBUTED TO CAKE MAKING

In 1882 Prof. Ellen H. Richards of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—that capable and far-seeing pioneer in scientific housekeeping, and founder of the American Home Economics Association made this careful determination as to the correct content of commercial baking powder. Professor Richards writes very definitely in *The Chemistry of Cooking and Cleaning*, published in Boston, 1882, as follows:

"The various products formed by the chemical decomposition of alum and soda are possibly the most injurious, as the sulphates are supposed to be the least readily absorbed salts. Taking into consideration the advantage given by the insolubility of cream of tartar in cold water, and the comparatively little danger from its derivative, Rochelle salt, it would seem to be, on the whole, the best substance to add to the soda in order to liberate the gas; but the proportions must be chemically exact, according to the reaction given. At least, there must be no alkali left, for a reason which will be given under the head of hindrances to digestion.

"Hence, baking powders prepared by weight and carefully mixed, are a great improvement on the teaspoonful measured by guess."

ELLEN H. RICHARDS

Discussing the use of baking powders in that standard treatise, *Food and the Principles of Dietetics*, by Dr. Robert Hutchison, published in London—1911—we read:

"These consist of mixtures of various chemical substances, which have this in common, that when moistened the ingredients of the powder act upon one another,
carbonic acid being given off. If, therefore, the powder has been thoroughly mixed with the flour, and water be added, the gas will be liberated all through the resulting dough, and the latter will be thoroughly aerated. A Lancet Commission, which inquired into the composition of these powders a few years ago, reported that the majority of them were pure, consisting of a mixture either of tartaric acid or bitartrate of potash with bicarbonate of soda. A few of them, however, contained alum, and these leave some alumina, or, more probably, hydrated oxide of aluminum, in the bread.

Concerning the ingredients of baking powder, Margaret E. Dodd, S.B., in Chemistry of the Household, published in The Library of Home Economics, Chicago, 1910, says:

"Cream of Tartar is the only acid substance commonly used which does not liberate the gas by simple contact in cold solution. It unites with 'soda' only when heated, because it is so slightly soluble in cold water.

"Experiment—To illustrate this, stir a little soda and 'cream of tartar' into some cold water in a cup. In another cup mix the same amounts of each in warm water. Note the difference in the action produced.

"To obtain an even distribution of the gas by thorough mixing, cream of tartar would seem to be the best medium by which to add the acid, but because there are other products which remain behind in the bread in using all the so-called baking powders, the healthfulness of these residues must be considered.

"Common salt is the safest residue and perhaps that from acid phosphate is next in order.

"The tartrate, lactate, and acetate of sodium are not known to be especially hurtful. As the important constituent of Seidlitz powders is Rochelle salt, the same compound as that resulting from the use of cream of tartar and 'soda,' it is not likely to be very harmful, even in the case of the habitual 'soda biscuit' eater, because of the small quantities taken."

[Injurious]
INJURIOUS PRODUCTS

“The various products formed by the chemical decomposition of the alum and ‘soda’ are possibly the most injurious, as are these sulphates, and are thought to be the least readily absorbed of salts. The sale of ‘alum’ baking powder is prohibited in many states.

“Taking into consideration then the advantage given by the insolubility of cream of tartar in cold water, and the comparatively little danger from its derivative—Rochelle salt, it would seem to be on the whole the best substance to add to the soda in order to liberate the gas, but the proportions should be chemically exact, since too much alkali would hinder the process of digestion. Hence baking powders prepared by weight and carefully mixed, are a great improvement over cream of tartar and soda measured separately. As commonly used, the proportions of soda should be a little less than half.”

Continuing the subject in *Foods and Household Management*, by Helen Kinne, Professor of Household Arts Education, and Miss Anna M. Cooley, B.S., Assistant Professor of Household Arts Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, published by Macmillan Company 1914, we read:

“Leavening Agents—The batter or dough is leavened by introducing into it air or a gas that expands when heated in the oven, thus making the whole porous and larger in bulk.

“Air—This is introduced into the batter by beating, or by beating air into the white of egg and stirring the beaten white into the batter.

“Steam—The water in the batter turns to steam in the oven and as it expands it assists in the leavening of the mass.

“Carbon dioxide Gas—This is introduced in three ways:

1. By using an acid with a carbonate.
2. By yeast fermentation.
3. By machinery.

“Yeast fermentation is studied in the chapter on bread making (Chapter XII) and the mechanical method
is a commercial process exclusively. Only the first method will be treated in this chapter.

"When an acid and any alkaline carbonate are dissolved together, a chemical action takes place, a gas is given off (carbon dioxide) and another substance is formed that is neutral, being neither acid nor alkaline, and known as a 'salt.' In selecting the two substances we must bear in mind this neutral substance that remains in the batter and insures its harmlessness.

"The lactic acid of sour milk is probably the earliest used, being a domestic product. The lactic acid is neutralized by bicarbonate of sodium, the latter being also called 'baking soda.' The resulting salt is harmless.

"Acid Molasses with soda is another old-fashioned method. Here the acid is developed by the fermentation of the molasses.

"Cream of tartar (acid potassium tartrate), obtained from crystals deposited in wine vats, came into use later, neutralized by bicarbonate of soda; two parts of cream of tartar to one of soda.

"Baking Powder—The first baking powders were made of cream of tartar and bicarbonate of soda, mixed with a starch to prevent the slight chemical action which would cause the powder to lose strength; and these two substances are now used in the best baking powders. The resulting salt is the Rochelle salt of medicine.

"An acid phosphate is sometimes used with soda, and this gives a harmless neutral substance.

"Cheaper acids have sometimes been used, especially alum. It is best not to use an alum powder. Select a standard kind, avoiding those that offer prizes for a certain number of boxes purchased. Even if these latter do not contain alum there is probably an excess of starch or flour.

"The advantage of baking powder is in the accuracy of the proportions of the two substances by weight. Even though the measuring of the cream of tartar and soda separately is accurate, the proportions may not be correct. There is no great advantage in homemade baking powder. It costs almost as much as the manufactured, and is not as perfect a product."

[In Principles]
In *Principles of Cooking*, by Emma Conley, State Inspector of Domestic Science for the State of Wisconsin, Miss Conley adds:

“Baking Powder may be grouped in three classes:
3. Alum Baking Powder.

“Cream of Tartar baking powder is made from cream of tartar (acid potassium tartrate) soda, and starch. It is the best-known baking powder and probably the most wholesome to use, because it leaves no harmful products in the food. It forms carbon dioxide (CO₂), water (H₂O) and Rochelle Salts—a mild laxative when taken in small quantities.

“Phosphate baking powder is made from acid calcium phosphate, soda, and starch. The only objection to its use is that the gas is liberated so quickly that much is lost before the food can be put into the oven.

“Alum powder is made from potash alum or ammonium alum, soda, and starch, and its sale is prohibited in some states because of the harmful effects of alum on the human system, though the alum is decomposed when soda is added.

“From the accompanying table,* which shows in what proportion to mix the ingredients for the three kinds of baking powder, it will be seen why alum baking powder is cheap and can be sold for twenty-five cents a pound and cream of tartar baking powder is necessarily higher in price.”

A very practical statement concerning the values of baking powder is made by Edith Greer in her text book *Food, What It Is and Does*, published by Ginn & Company, Boston, Mass., 1915. In this book on page 33 we read:

“Baking powders differ in the substances they leave in the leavened mixture. The hygienic desirability of baking powder is determined by the wholesomeness of this residue. None of these residues is necessary to the mixture and all may be more or less disturbing to digestion. Soda and starch are common to all baking powders.

*Table omitted because of lack of space.*
powders. These are practically harmless. The acid element varies. It is through this that harm may come. There are three usual types of baking powders.

"Cream of tartar baking powders contain cream of tartar and some tartaric acid. These act most quickly and usually cost most. Cream of tartar is left from grape-juice as wine is made. It leaves as a residue the active element of Seidlitz powders. This is laxative in its action. But so little is taken into the body in baking powder foods that this effect is not appreciable.

"Phosphate baking powders contain phosphoric acid in the form of phosphates. After the action of the baking powder some of this substance is left in the food. It is not, as is sometimes seen stated, in the same form as the phosphates that are lost from grains in grinding nor is it of the same use in the body as these would be. This residue is present in these baking powders in much larger quantity than the phosphates of the grains. It acts as a laxative. Phosphate baking powders do not keep well. They may contain on this account an excess of starch as a filler.

"Alum baking powders contain sulphuric acid in alkali sulphates. These are considered harmful by physiological scientists. They hinder digestion by acting as an astringent, as does the substance commonly known as alum. Alum touched to the tongue puckers the mouth. Alum baking powder residue taken in food acts similarly upon the digestive tract.

"Seek lightness of leavened mixture with freedom from insoluble residues.

"As commercial baking powders are required by law to state their ingredients on their labels, no one need therefore use a rising-agent containing deleterious or doubtful residue. Through only ignorance, negligence or indifference will this happen."

One of the most experienced teachers of cookery in this country is Miss Matilda Campbell, of Toledo, Ohio, for many years Director of Domestic Science in the public schools of that city, in A TEXTBOOK OF DOMESTIC SCIENCE FOR HIGH SCHOOLS, by Miss Campbell, published in 1914, we read:
"Baking Powders—

"Baking powder is composed of bi-carbonate of sodium $\text{NaHCO}_3$, which has in its composition carbon dioxide and some acid. When the mixture is wet, the acid serves to liberate the carbon dioxide from the sodium bicarbonate. In order to keep those materials dry and to prevent chemical action from taking place before they are used, starch is added and is called a 'filler.' In cheap baking powders the starch is added in very large amounts. The value of a baking powder depends upon the amount of gas it gives off. Its healthfulness depends upon its freedom from injurious residue left in the food.

"There are three classes of baking powder upon the market:
1. Cream of Tartar
2. Phosphate
3. Alum

"Cream of tartar is potassium acid tartrate, $\text{KH}_2\text{C}_4\text{H}_4\text{O}_6$. It is prepared from the argols which collect on the inside of wine casks. These are then refined and purified and known as cream of tartar.

"The chemical reaction of cream of tartar baking powder is as follows:

$\text{potassium acid} + \text{bicarbonate} = \text{Rochelle} + \text{carbon} + \text{water}$
$\text{tartrate of sodium salt} + \text{dioxide}$
$\text{HKH}_2\text{C}_4\text{O}_6 + \text{NaHCO}_3 = \text{KNaC}_4\text{H}_4\text{O}_6 + \text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}$

It is not surprising to find that commercial costs have been an influencing factor in the production of baking powder for we read that:

"Cream of Tartar is expensive, so cheaper forms of acid are often used in baking powders.

**PHOSPHATE BAKING POWDERS**

"The acid used is phosphoric acid, which is obtained by the action of sulphuric acid on ground bone. The phosphate probably has little power to furnish phos-
phate to the body, not being in a form in which the body can assimilate it.

**ALUM BAKING POWDERS**

“These are the most objectionable forms of baking powders, as their residue has an irritating effect upon the mucuous membranes of the digestive organs. They are very cheap powders, so, unfortunately they are extensively used.”

**IN CONCLUSION**

The history of cookery is of the utmost antiquity, showing that the methods of preparing food were of paramount importance, and early literature, even that of “Old Testament” days, includes many references to cooks and cookery, as in I Samuel, 8, 13, we read:

“And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.”

Naturally the use of leavenings has been of vital concern and their use of significant interest, for in the early Christian Church the discussion concerning leavened and unleavened bread, split the Church into two divisions—and two they remain even to this day.

The improvement of leavening has been constant, and from the sixteenth century, which serves as the beginning of this study, each change, from barm to baking powder, has registered as a definite step in advance.

Out of all the experience of the preceding years, now numbered into decades and marshalled into three centuries, comes a valuable tradition of what enters into, the production of the delicious cake of today. There has been constant study of ingredients, careful search for added niceties, specially guarded secrets about methods and blending; little delicate touches in baking and cooling and storing, icing or frosting flavors, so that the cake might further tickle the palate and smack the lips of the favored guest with

[a desire]
a desire for more—the topping evidence of successful cake making.

The Gentle Art of Cake Making in its present delicious form is distinctly American, contributed by the women of the homes, north, south, east and west, to the families of the nation. The proud Southern matron of antebellum days reserved the making of the cakes for her own contribution to the family menu. The New England mother also deemed the making of fine cakes her special privilege, so too West and far West. The spirit of the cake makers of days gone by breathes through the housewives and home makers of today and stirs the present generation to very careful attention as well as the same keen interest in Culinary Art as quickened the women in the homes of America's yesterday; and, perhaps admonishes the women of today not to let the choice standard that they wrought with such meticulous care, drag in mire of indifferent effort or careless housekeeping.

Cake making is the apotheosis of culinary art, and the torch of its progress, which had its first lighting in the stately Abbeys across the sea, must never be extinguished nor permitted to grow dim, but be carried onward as a prized heritage from preceding days, and delivered intact and improved to the generations that are to follow. To our daughters, and our daughters' daughters, we bequeath the faith that the Gentle Art of Cake Making and fine cooking may go marching on to higher standards, more attractive forms, and most delicious content.

FINIS
THE NUN’S CAKE OF TODAY*

“One cup butter, one and one-half cup powdered sugar, yolks of five eggs, whites of two eggs, three-quarters of a cup of milk, three cups pastry flour, two and one-half teaspoons baking powder, one-quarter teaspoon salt, three teaspoons caraway seeds,† two teaspoons rose water,† one-half teaspoon extract of cinnamon.†

“Beat butter until soft and creamy, add sugar and yolks of eggs beating well. Stir in the unbeaten whites of eggs and beat one minute. Sift flour with baking powder and salt adding alternately with milk. Sprinkle in the caraway seeds, beat well and add flavoring. Pour into well buttered cake tin and bake forty-five minutes in a moderate oven.

†If another flavor than the one above specified is desired, substitute 2 teaspoons vanilla for the rose water, caraway and cinnamon indicated.”

*See old version on page 11.
### Fillings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIG FILLING</th>
<th>COCOANUT FILLING</th>
<th>JELLY FILLING</th>
<th>COCOA FILLING</th>
<th>CREAM FILLING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>½ lb. chopped figs</td>
<td>Beat 1 egg white until stiff, add 1 tablespoon milk, ½ teaspoon vanilla, and 1 cup confectioner’s sugar. Spread on cake and sprinkle each layer with shredded coconut.</td>
<td>Spread jelly—currant or other fruit—between layers.</td>
<td>6 tablespoons cocoa</td>
<td>% cup sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ cup sugar</td>
<td>1 ½ teaspoons salt</td>
<td>½ cup sugar</td>
<td>½ teaspoon salt</td>
<td>% cup flour</td>
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<tr>
<td>½ cup boiling water</td>
<td>2 tablespoons butter</td>
<td>¼ cup milk</td>
<td>½ teaspoon salt</td>
<td>% cup scalded milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon lemon juice</td>
<td>½ teaspoon vanilla</td>
<td>3 cups pastry flour</td>
<td>1 teaspoon vanilla</td>
<td>1 egg yolks</td>
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### The Batter

#### THE MASTER CAKE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>¼ cup butter</th>
<th>1 ½ cups sugar</th>
<th>3 eggs, beaten separately</th>
<th>1 teaspoon lemon or vanilla</th>
<th>¼ cup milk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 cups sugar</td>
<td>3 cups pastry flour</td>
<td>3 level teaspoonsful baking-powder</td>
<td>½ teaspoonful salt</td>
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#### Variations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RAISIN CAKE</th>
<th>SPICE CAKE</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup raisins, well floured, added to batter.</td>
<td>Cold coffee instead of milk, 1 teaspoon cinnamon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>½ teaspoon nutmeg</td>
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<td></td>
<td>¼ teaspoon clove</td>
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</table>

#### Leopard Cake (Yellow and Brown)

For brown mixture add 1½ squares melted chocolate

#### Hickory Nut Cake

1 cup chopped hickory nut meats.

#### Individual Cakes or Luncheon Cakes

Use small tins, regular batter, iced, or any above mixtures.

#### Domino Cakes

Use regular batter, bake in thin layer, cut in domino size, use white icing, use chocolate for domino mark.

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**Method**

Cream butter, add sugar and yolks of eggs well beaten. Sift dry ingredients and add alternately with milk, flavor and bake in moderate oven.

**Volume or Product**

2 medium loaves or 1 loaf cake, 1 layer or dozen individual cakes.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Where Published</th>
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<tr>
<td>Country Contentments</td>
<td>Gervase Markham</td>
<td>London</td>
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<td>The Compleat Cook</td>
<td>Anony</td>
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<td>Robert May</td>
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<td>T. Hall</td>
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<td>Hannah Glasse</td>
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<td>Richard Briggs</td>
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<td>Seventy-Five Receipts</td>
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<td>Boston</td>
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<td>The Virginia Housewife</td>
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<td>The American Frugal Housewife</td>
<td>Mrs. Child</td>
<td>Boston</td>
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<td>A Housekeeper</td>
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<td>G. W. Thornbury</td>
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<td>Practical Cooking and Dinner Giving</td>
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<td>Mary Stuart Smith</td>
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<td>Ellen H. Richards</td>
<td>Boston</td>
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<td>A. Hayward</td>
<td>London</td>
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<td>Food and Principles of Dietetics</td>
<td>Robert Hutchison</td>
<td>London</td>
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<td>Chemistry of the Household</td>
<td>Margaret Dodd</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>1910</td>
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<td>Foods and Household Management</td>
<td>Helen Kinne and Anna Cooley</td>
<td>New York</td>
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<td>Edith Greer</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>1914</td>
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<td>A Textbook of Domestic Science</td>
<td>Matilda Campbell</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Principles of Cookery</td>
<td>Emma Conley</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>1914</td>
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</table>
“Blest epicures from every climate
Pour their gustful praise; this
Culminating store improved
In sweets and spices,
Hourly draws the
Countless tribute
of a World’s
Applause”