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## SIMPLE DESSERTS



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# SIMPLE DESSERTS

By MIRIAM J. WILLIAMS

Dessert, or the last course of a meal, is the means of bringing a feeling of satisfaction. It is unnecessary and poorly planned if it brings about a feeling of over-eating or heaviness.

What to plan for dessert, then, should be determined by what the rest of the meal contains. If the meal is a hearty meat-potato-vegetable sort, the dessert can well be a light one. If food of a lighter sort is served, as with one main dish and a salad, a heavier dessert may be served. Again if the meal is rich in proteins and starch, a dessert which supplements but does not supply this is best. For example, a steamed dessert which is very rich in eggs, nuts and fat, is not appropriate with a roast meat and rich-gravy sort of meal, but it might occasionally be served to grown-ups without causing too much strain, with a lighter meal.

Of course the man working out of doors will be granted heavier desserts, even with a hearty main course, but it is not wisdom to pattern meals for the whole family after his needs.

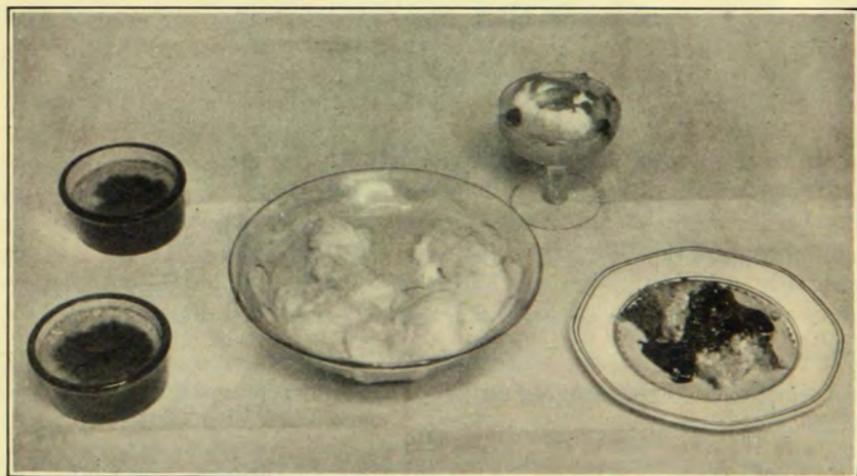
Light desserts, then, include these: Fruit, (served alone or with simple cookies or wafers), simple gelatine desserts, ices, sherbets, junket. Desserts which are still light enough to accompany the average dinner, include: Simple ice creams and frozen desserts, custards, tapioca or other cereal puddings, rich gelatine desserts and simple cakes or puddings.

Those which we would term as heavy desserts are: Pastry of all kinds, rich cakes, puddings which are rich in fat or which are served with a rich sauce, short cakes, waffles, rich frozen desserts.

Perhaps because we have been blessed with an abundance of fruit, we consider it with some scorn in choosing a "company" dessert. Nothing can be more satisfying than seasonable fruit attractively served. Some of the finest tea rooms, diners and cafes feature the most simple fruit desserts—pink-tinted rhubarb in a glass dish, a dried-fruit sponge or whip, as prune or apricot whip, with custard sauce, a baked apple, or a mingling of two or three choice canned fruits which they call a "compote." The poorer the restaurant, the more often will pie be the only form of dessert offered.

The making of delectable pies will always be an enviable art, but the woman who can and does serve simpler desserts attractively is just as good a cook.

Since a generous amount of milk must be included daily if body requirements are met, and since "two fruits daily" is a worthy standard, then desserts which use these foods are wisely selected. Some desserts offer nothing more than fuel—to give our bodies heat and energy. Desserts which feature milk, eggs and fruit supply minerals, vitamins and efficient protein in addition to fuel.



MILK AND EGGS ARE FEATURED IN BAKED CUSTARD, FLOATING ISLAND, BANANA CUSTARD AND CAKE WITH CUSTARD SAUCE.

### Custards

The greatest cause of failure in making custards is over-cooking. Good fresh eggs and sweet milk are of course essential. Soft custards are cooked in a double boiler, but if allowed to stand over hot water too long they will curdle. Baked custards are always set in a pan of hot water and baked in a moderate oven.

Note: All measurements are level. Abbreviations are c.—cup; t.—teaspoon; T.—tablespoon.

#### 1.—Soft Custard.

3 c. milk

4 eggs

$\frac{1}{8}$  t. salt

1 t. vanilla

$\frac{1}{3}$  c. sugar

Heat the milk, sugar and salt in a double boiler. Beat eggs slightly and add some of the hot milk to them, then pour all into the double boiler. Stir constantly until the custard coats the spoon. Remove at once, place in a pan of cold water, stirring until cool. Add vanilla.

2.—**Peach or Banana Custard.**—Line a glass serving dish with alternate layers of stale sponge cake and sliced peaches or bananas. Pour soft custard over all and chill thoroly before serving.

3.—**Floating Island.**—Floating Island is made by reserving the whites of 2 of the eggs used for the custard. Beat with 4 T. of sugar and a sprinkle of salt. Drop the stiffly beaten whites into the custard before it is entirely cool. Or the whites may be dropped by tablespoons into a pan of hot water and browned in the oven before being put on top of the custard. This makes an attractive topping for junkets, tapioca puddings and other desserts.

4.—**Baked Custard.**—Baked custard is made with the same proportions as for soft custard. The milk is first heated slightly, then combined with other ingredients and baked in individual custard cups or a larger baking dish. Put the custard cups in a larger pan and surround by hot water. Bake in a moderate oven. Test by inserting a knife in the custard, and if it comes out clean, remove them at once from the oven and from the pan of hot water.

5.—**Carmel Custard.**—Add 3 T. of carmel sirup to the milk as it is being scalded, or use brown sugar and maple flavoring instead of white sugar and vanilla.

6.—**Honey Custard.**—Use  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. honey in place of the sugar and  $\frac{1}{8}$  t. cinnamon in place of vanilla.

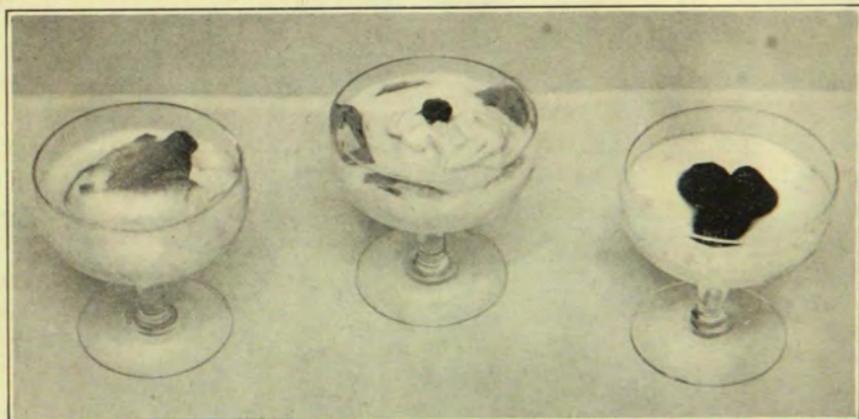
7.—**Cocoanut Custard.**—Add shredded cocoanut to baked custard before baking. Or put cocoanut in soft custard after it is removed from the fire.

### Lemon Pudding

Cream together 1 c. sugar, 1 T. flour, 1 T. butter. Add 2 beaten egg yolks, the grated rind and juice of 1 lemon and 1 c. milk. Fold in stiffly beaten whites and pour into custard cups. Bake as a custard in a moderate oven and set in a pan of hot water.

### Junket

Junket is as simply made as any dessert possible and is a splendid way to increase the amount of milk used. Either junket tablets or the flavored junket powder may be used. Many variations are possible to increase its attractiveness for children. A small amount of pink coloring, garnishes of fresh fruit, of jam or preserves, toppings of meringue or whipped cream all add variety. Follow the directions which come with the tablet or powder.



THAT MOST SIMPLE OF DESSERTS, JUNKET, CAN BE VARIED WITH FRUIT AND DIFFERENT TOPPINGS.

### Gelatine Desserts

With gelatine desserts, care must be taken to measure liquid carefully, or the jelly will be too stiff or too thin. The granulated or unflavored gelatine must first be soaked in cold water, then dissolved in hot liquid and flavored.

The prepared jello powders may be used in the recipes given below if care is given to combining flavors. Sugar should then be omitted. For example, lemon jello is a good foundation for moulding prunes.

If you are using canned fruit and fruit juice, the unflavored gelatine is often a saving. One package of gelatine has two envelopes and will make 2 quarts of jelly. Ask for the acidulated gelatine since it contains an envelope of lemon flavoring.

### Jellied Fruit

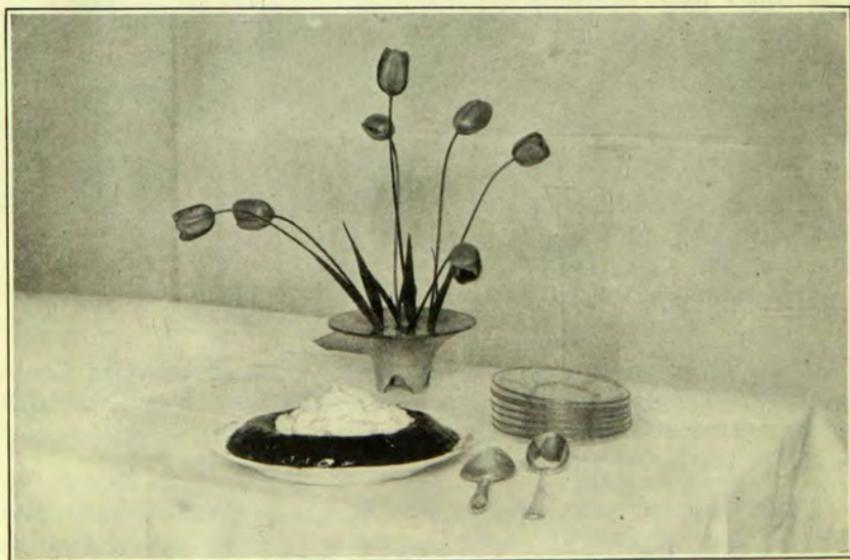
1 envelope or 2 T. gelatine	2 c. canned or stewed fruit
$\frac{1}{3}$ c. cold water	(drained, seeded, etc., cut if
$2\frac{1}{2}$ c. hot liquid (juice and water	desired)
	Sugar as needed

Acidulated flavoring or lemon juice if desired.

Soak gelatine in cold water until soft (also acidulated flavoring if it is needed for flavor.) Heat fruit juice with enough water to make  $2\frac{1}{2}$  c. Pour over gelatine, add sugar while it is hot. Cool, and when beginning to thicken, add canned fruit. Mould and chill.

### Variations

1.—Use as the fruit, stewed prunes which have been soaked and then cooked with stick cinnamon, and cut in quarters lengthwise. Add acidulated flavöring, or lemon juice, and sugar to the jelly mixture and cool before adding prunes. Unmold and serve with Marshmallow Cream. (See recipe under sauces.)



TO SERVE MOULDED PRUNE JELLY AT THE TABLE MAKES A FESTIVE OCCASION.

2.—For a Bavarian Cream, use fruit pulp and juice rubbed thru a sieve, measured to secure a total of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  c. Add while hot to soaked gelatine and sweeten if necessary. Cool and when the mixture is thickening, fold in 1 c. of cream which has been whipped until stiff, and stir until smooth. Keep in a pan of cold water or cracked ice during the mixing process. Prunes, apricots, peaches, berries of all kinds make delicious Bavarian Creams.

3.—For a Whip or Charlotte, follow the same directions as for a Bavarian Cream, using 3 or 4 stiffly beaten egg whites in place of the whipped cream. Then beat the whole mixture (set bowl in a pan of cold water or ice) until it thickens again. Pieces of fruit may be laid in the bottom of the mould.

4.—Maple Sponge.—Make a sirup of 2 c. of brown or maple sugar and  $\frac{3}{4}$  c. hot water. Boil 10 min. and pour over 1 envelope of gelatine which has been soaked in  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. cold water. Cool, and when

nearly set, add the whites of 2 eggs beaten stiff and  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. nut meats. Mould and chill. Serve with a custard sauce made from the egg yolks, 1 c. milk, 3 T. sugar, and vanilla.

### 5.—Spanish Cream.

1 qt. milk	$\frac{1}{4}$ t. salt
2 T. or 1 envelope granulated gelatine	5 eggs
$\frac{1}{3}$ c. cold water	$\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar

flavoring

Soak the gelatine in the cold water until soft. Heat the milk in a double boiler, and add to it the sugar and the salt. Beat the egg yolks, and gradually add the hot milk to them. Mix well, pour back into the double boiler and cook this mixture until it thickens like a soft custard. Remove it from the fire, add the softened gelatine to this hot mixture, stir well, strain and cool. Meanwhile beat the egg whites until fluffy. Fold them into the custard after it has begun to set and add  $\frac{1}{2}$  t. of vanilla. Pour into individual moulds or a pudding dish wet with cold water, and set away to become firm. Serve with cream or with a sauce of crushed fruit.

## Cereal Puddings

Many puddings have some form of cereal or bread as the basis of them, as bread or cake crumbs, rice, tapioca, flour or cereal meals. These make quite hearty desserts and should be used with a fairly light meal.

Most of these given are suitable for children as well as adults, altho steamed puddings or those with nuts in them should not be given to young children.

Any puddings containing eggs and milk in quantity should be cooked at a low temperature, or baked like custards in a pan surrounded by hot water.

Any uncooked starchy substance, as tapioca, cornstarch, flour or cornmeal, needs a sufficient time to insure thoro cooking. All of these substances have definite thickening properties and need to be measured carefully.

### Special Bread Pudding.

$1\frac{1}{2}$ c. bread crumbs	3 c. milk	$\frac{1}{2}$ c. fruit, jam or crushed
2 egg yolks	1 T. butter	pineapple
$\frac{2}{3}$ c. sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ t. salt	2 egg whites
Grated lemon rind		4 T. sugar

Soak bread in scalded milk, add seasonings and beaten egg yolks. Pour into pudding dish and bake until firm in a slow oven. Spread

with fruit and top with a meringue made by beating whites with 4 T. sugar. Brown in a slow oven.

### Steamed Date Pudding.

2 c. fresh, soft bread crumbs	8 T. water
1 pkg. dates, cut	2 eggs
$\frac{1}{2}$ c. nuts, chopped	$\frac{1}{2}$ t. salt
$\frac{1}{2}$ t. baking powder in	$\frac{1}{2}$ c. brown sugar
1 T. cold water	

Combine crumbs, dates, nuts. Add well-beaten eggs, water and sugar which have been combined. Add salt and baking powder. Pour into a greased mould, cover and steam 45 minutes. Serve with cream or lemon sauce. Delicious and inexpensive. Nuts may be omitted.

**Graham-Cracker Pudding.**—Mix 2 c. graham-cracker crumbs,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  c. sugar, 1 t. salt, 1 t. baking powder, and add 1 c. chopped nuts. Add the yolks of 5 eggs, well beaten, and fold in the stiffly beaten whites. Bake in a moderate oven and serve with whipped cream.

**Norwegian Prune Pudding.**—Soak  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of prunes in 2 c. water several hours, add a stick of cinnamon and simmer slowly until soft, keeping them fairly well covered with water. Remove from stove and add boiling water to make  $2\frac{1}{2}$  c. of juice. Add a speck of salt, 1 c. of sugar, and 6 T. of cornstarch which has been diluted with a little cold water. Cook until thick and starchy taste has disappeared (about 20 minutes). Remove cinnamon, add juice of half a lemon, mould and chill. Serve with cream.

**Apple or Rhubarb Tapioca.**—Cook in a double boiler  $2\frac{1}{2}$  c. boiling water,  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. minute tapioca,  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. sugar, and a little salt, until tapioca is transparent. Prepare 2 c. rhubarb or tart apples, (cut in small pieces) and put in the bottom of a baking dish. Pour over the tapioca mixture and cook until the fruit is soft. Serve warm with cream.

### Indian Tapioca Pudding.

$\frac{1}{3}$ c. tapioca	1 c. molasses
$\frac{1}{4}$ c. cornmeal	$\frac{1}{2}$ t. salt
1 qt. milk (scalded)	2 T. butter
$1\frac{1}{2}$ c. milk (cold)	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. chopped dates (if desired)

Mix together tapioca and cornmeal and sprinkle into the scalded milk. Stir and cook until the tapioca becomes transparent, then add molasses, salt, butter and dates. Pour into a buttered baking dish, pour in the cold milk and without stirring, set in the oven. Bake about 1 hour. Serve cold with cream or butterscotch sauce.

**Apple Gingerbread.**—Pare, core and slice several apples. Put in the bottom of a square or oblong baking pan and sprinkle with sugar. A very little water may be added. Put in the oven to start cooking. When just partially cooked pour over a gingerbread batter, bake and serve warm, with or without cream.

**Gingerbread.**

½ c. sugar	1 t. soda
½ c. shortening	½ t. ginger
½ c. molasses	½ t. allspice
2 eggs	1 t. cinnamon
½ t. salt	2 c. flour (sift once before measuring)
1 c. boiling water	

Cream fat and sugar. Add molasses, beat well, then add eggs. Sift dry ingredients and add. Mix boiling water with soda and combine. Stir as quickly as possible and put in a moderate oven at once.

**Chocolate Pudding.**

4 c. milk	1 t. vanilla
1½ squares unsweetened chocolate	6 level T. cornstarch
½ c. sugar	½ t. salt
	1 egg

Mix the cornstarch and sugar. Melt the chocolate and heat it with the milk and salt in a double boiler. Pour some of this warm milk into the cornstarch and sugar. Return it to the double boiler, stirring until thickened; then cover and cook for about 20 minutes. Beat the egg until light, and after pouring the hot pudding into it, beat well again. Add the vanilla and pour at once into a wet mould. Chill thoroly. Serve with a soft custard, cream or whipped cream.

**Fruit Desserts**

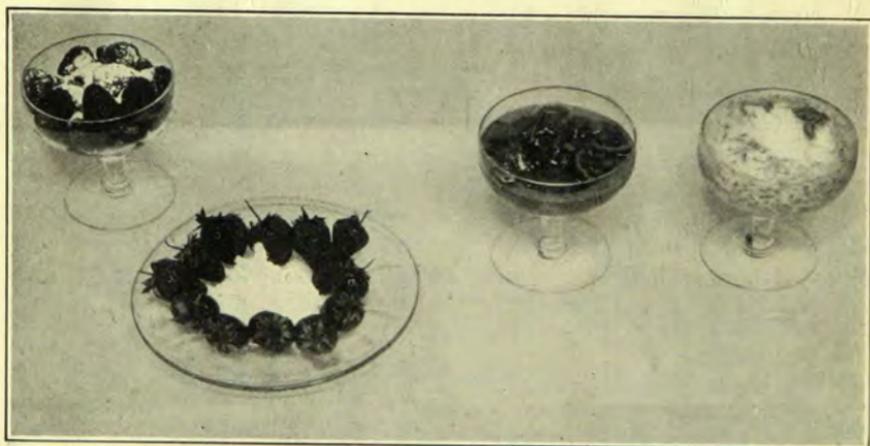
Any fresh, dried or canned fruit is suitable for serving as dessert. The method of serving and garnishing is half the secret. Cookies are a more wholesome accompaniment than cake.

Fruit punch makes a pleasing dessert, especially in summer. Any favorite combination of fruit juices is acceptable; make a boiled sirup of sugar and water to sweeten. Garnish with a thin slice of orange or lemon or a whole piece of fruit. Serve very cold, and accompany with a wafer or cookie.

A fruit salad, either of fresh or canned fruits can often serve as dessert. Use a minimum amount of dressing, or simply sprinkle with lemon juice and top with a small spoonful of whipped cream. Accompany with a salted wafer.

**Fruit Compote.**—Put half of a fine canned peach, half a fine canned pear and a canned plum in each individual dish with the mingled fruit juices over all. Chill before serving.

**Peach Melba.**—Put half a peach on a slice of stale sponge cake and pour over all a rich raspberry sirup. Two halves of a peach may be filled with jam and a rich red sirup poured over the whole peach.



WHAT CAN BE MORE SATISFYING THAN STRAWBERRIES OR RHUBARB, ATTRACTIVELY SERVED?

**Butterscotch Apples.**—Core as many apples as are wished. Do not peel. Fill each cavity with brown sugar and place a lump of butter on top of each apple. Place in rather deep cake or pie pan, put in water about one-half inch deep and add enough brown sugar to make a sirup. Bake in a moderate oven (375 degrees) until done and serve either plain with the sirup or with whipped cream. A few nuts can be added to each apple if desired. The brown sugar and butter give the apples a delicious flavor.

**Baked Rhubarb with Orange.**—Cut rhubarb in half-inch pieces and put in a baking dish with one-third its volume of sugar. Cut a half or the whole of a thin-skinned orange in thin half-slices and mix with the rhubarb. Cover the dish during the first part of baking, and stir only once or twice, taking care to keep pieces whole.

**Swiss Raspberry Cream.**—Cook 1 c. raspberry juice, 4 T. sugar and 4 egg-yolks in a double boiler until thick, stirring constantly. Fold in egg-whites while it is over hot water. Place in glass serving dishes to cool. Garnish with whole berries.

**Apple-Sauce Variations.**—Apples deserve special mention since the average home uses them as the most logical means of supplement-

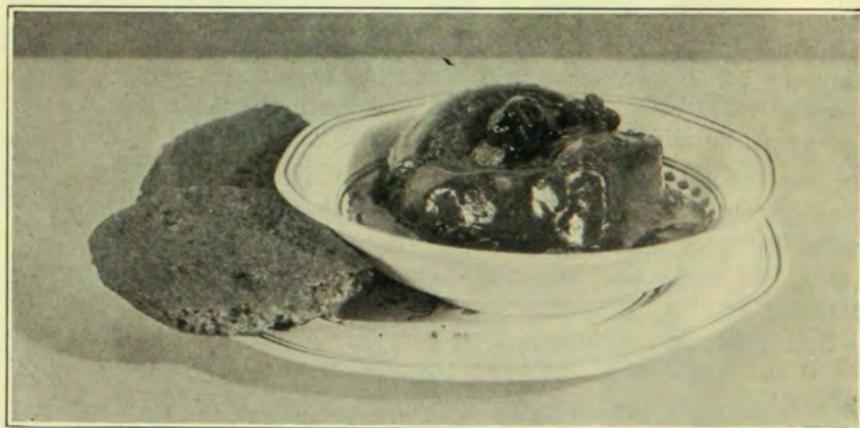
ing home-canned fruits. Just "as is" they make a splendid between-meal lunch or dessert for the school lunch. The family will not tire of them if the plain apple-sauce type of dessert is varied occasionally.

1. Cook with stick cinnamon and a clove or two if apples are old or not decided in flavor. Or a sprinkle of grated nutmeg and a lump of butter improves a sauce that is served warm.

2. Add 1 c. cleaned raisins during the last part of cooking apples for sauce and cook until raisins are plump.

3. Cook apples with a few slices of lemon or add a little grated lemon rind.

4. Add cinnamon candies to the sirup and cook whole apples (cored and pared) or neat sections of apple, in the pink sirup until done.



BAKED APPLE WITH OATMEAL COOKIES -- DELICIOUS THO COMMONPLACE.

5. Cook whole pared and cored apples, or half-pieces, in sirup until soft. Remove to a pan, sprinkle with sugar and glaze in oven. Fill centers with red jelly.

6. Use brown sugar and water for the sirup in which apples are cooked and add a little orange juice when apples are tender.

7. Cook apples in sirup made of honey and water instead of sugar and water. Sprinkle with grated cocoanut.

### Sauces and Fillings

Plain cakes furnish the basis for many desserts. One-egg or two-egg plain cakes, sour-cream cake, angel and sponge cake are especially adapted to this purpose. The success of such a dessert lies chiefly in the sauce served with it.

Sauces also help puddings, ice creams and custards, altho their use can be overdone. It is better to err on the side of simplicity than over-garnishing or over-dressing a dessert. The occasional use of sauces makes a company dessert out of the most ordinary custard or pudding.

**Marshmallow Cream.**—(For prune gelatine, plain cakes, gingerbread, etc.) Beat 1 c. of cream, until stiff, add a dozen or so marshmallows cut in quarters (use wet scissors) and vanilla. Let stand 1 or 2 hours or until the marshmallows are partially dissolved in the cream.

**Cream Filling.**—(For angel or sponge cake baked in layers.) Heat 1 c. sweet cream in a double boiler. Beat 3 egg yolks until very light and combine with 1 t. cornstarch mixed with a little milk. Stir into the cream and cook until thick. Remove from fire and add 1 c. peanut brittle which has been run thru a food chopper. Spread while warm between layers of cake.

**Butterscotch Sauce.**—(For ice cream, custards, puddings.) Mix together 1 c. brown sugar, 2 T. flour,  $\frac{1}{4}$  t. salt and a speck of cinnamon, add 1 c. boiling water and cook until the flour loses its raw taste and the mixture thickens. Beat in 2 T. butter and  $\frac{1}{2}$  t. vanilla.

**Carmel Sauce.**—(For ice cream or plain puddings.) Cook in a double boiler for 40 minutes:  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. dark corn syrup,  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. brown sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. rich cream.

**Orange or Lemon Sauce.**—(For puddings, plain cakes, cottage pudding.) Mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. sugar with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  T. cornstarch, pour over 1 c. boiling water and add the grated rind of 1 orange or 1 lemon. Cook 15 minutes, add 3 T. orange or lemon juice and a small lump of butter.

**Apricot or Fruit Sauce.**—(For plain cake, cottage puddings.) Heat 1 c. sweetened fruit juice, and stir in 1 T. cornstarch mixed with a little of the juice. Cook until thick, add the juice of one-half lemon. A few apricot halves or whole berries may be served over the cake with the sauce.

There are other types of desserts not discussed, as frozen desserts and candies. Frozen desserts, especially, are popular as a last course. They offer an opportunity to use milk and fruits in various combinations and should be valued for their source of these two rather than being chiefly rich in cream and sugar.

Candies make excellent desserts, and particularly when there is need to cut down on the amount of sweets which the children are having. They will be as delighted with a surprise dessert of peanut brittle, stuffed dates or prunes, marshmallows or other simple sweet, as with an elaborate concoction or rich dessert.