

confectioner's starch, and must be kept very dry and clean, and should always be dried and sieved before use.

Fondants may be moulded in starch instead of in rubber moulds, and for liqueurs and the moulding of fruit jellies it is essential.

Gelatine.—When gelatine enters into the composition of any sweetmeat it should be remembered that cheap gelatines are apt to impart a flavour of glue, and therefore a good maker's should be used. Also, as gelatines vary somewhat in their thickening properties, the same make should, when found satisfactory, be adhered to. Leaf gelatines, being purified by what is called the "acid process," contain a small quantity of acid, and when used with milk or cream care must be taken not to overheat the two substances together, or the milk will curdle.

Nuts.—Almonds are perhaps the most used of all nuts. A very fine flavour can be obtained by a judicious blending of both sweet and bitter almonds. The flavour of almonds and other nuts is always improved by gentle roasting, which brings out the flavour in a marked degree. For chopping, grinding, and pounding, Sicilian or Valencia almonds will be found satisfactory, but for "burnt almonds" the finest Jordan almonds should be used. Pistachios or green almonds make a beautiful decoration, but on account of their high price should be used sparingly.

Walnuts and Barcelona nuts should be bought shelled, as much labour is thus saved, and there is much less waste from breakage.

Pignolias and Brazil Nuts.—For variety in flavours pignolia nuts (the kernel of the stone pine) and Brazil nuts are also used in sweet-making.

Chestnuts.—The Italian chestnut or "Marrana" is the variety best suited for confectionery, especially in the production of the well-known "marrons glacés." The finest quality are grown in the neighbourhood of Turin.

CHAPTER III

"WRINKLES"

FOR those who have not made a study of cookery an explanation of some of the processes necessary in preparing various nuts, sugar, and eggs, etc., for sweet-making may prove useful.

How to shell Nuts.—Use nut-crackers or strike them gently with a flat weight, so that the kernel may not be crushed as very frequently many nuts are wasted in this way. When possible it is much more profitable to buy walnuts, Barcelona kernels, etc., ready shelled.

How to shell Chestnuts.—Score the outer shell with a sharp knife and place in the oven for a few minutes, when it will be found quite easy to remove outer shell.

How to remove inner skin from Barcelona Kernels.—Place them on a small roasting-tin in oven. After a short time the skins will become brittle, and can be rubbed off in a coarse towel.

How to blanch Almonds.—Put them into a pan with cold water and bring to boiling point, then remove from fire. Drain and plunge them into cold water. Lift on to a coarse cloth and rub off outer skins.

How to blanch Pistachios.—These nuts require not only to be brought to boiling point, but to be boiled for a few minutes before plunging into cold water. The process of blanching is then completed in the same way as that described for almonds.

If blanched and not used at once these nuts must be kept in the dark, or they quickly lose colour.

How to colour Almonds.—A pretty brown shade can be obtained by careful toasting. Pistachios being expensive luxuries, almonds coloured green are sometimes substituted. To do this chop the almonds finely after they have been blanched and dried. Spread them on grease-proof paper, sprinkle colour over them, and rub evenly throughout. Dry carefully and keep for use.

How to colour Cocoa-nut.—Desiccated cocoa-nut may be variously coloured for decorative purposes in the same way as above described.

How to chop Nuts.—A thick board of hard wood should be kept in every kitchen for chopping on, as baking boards are roughened and spoiled if used for this purpose. An elm board is often used; though dark in colour it is very hard and durable.

Place nuts on board and take a pointed knife; hold down point on board with left hand and chop by moving handle of knife rapidly up and down. This method prevents nuts from scattering.

How to shred Almonds and Pistachios.—Blanch, then split and cut in thin strips lengthways.

How to grind Nuts.—This process makes pounding much easier, and can easily be accomplished by means of a small nut-mill which can be had at a trifling cost.

How to pound Nuts.—For this process a mortar and pestle are required. The nuts are first blanched, then ground or chopped and beaten with pestle to a smooth paste. A few drops of orange-flower water or rose water, added during the process, help to prevent the paste becoming too oily.

How to colour Sugar.—Take coarse granulated or fine castor sugar, according to the purpose for which sugar is to be used. Sprinkle sugar on grease-proof paper, and sprinkle colour over. Rub in colour till evenly distributed. Then lay in a warm place till dry, and bottle for use.

How to clarify Sugar.—After making syrup in usual way pour it over beaten whites of eggs, allowing two

whites to one pound of sugar. Return to pan and wait till albumen of eggs coagulates and rises to surface, when all impurities will be removed and syrup left perfectly clear.

How to stone Dates.—Slit the dates lengthways and stones can easily be removed with a small skewer.

How to stone Raisins.—Place a few of the raisins in a basin of hot water. Cut raisins open and remove stones. When hot water is used this process loses much of its unpleasantness.

How to beat Whites.—Separate eggs very carefully, keeping yolk whole, for any particles of yolk mixing with whites will prevent their rising properly. One or two whites are best beaten on a plate with a broad-bladed knife, three or more being whisked in a basin with egg whisk. Always beat eggs in a cool place; they will rise much more quickly if beaten in the draught of an open door or window. When stiff enough they will cut clean with a knife, or can be gathered in a lump on end of whisk.

How to prepare Icing Sugar.—Keep in a very dry place in an air-tight tin, and before using rub through a hair sieve.

How to prepare Confectioner's Starch.—Keep always in an air-tight tin in a warm place. Before filling starch tray, heat starch in a moderate oven. Then allow to cool, sieve, and pack in tray.

How to crease Toffees.—This expression, though somewhat puzzling, simply means to mark toffees whilst still warm. It will then be found that, when cold, they can easily be broken up at the marks or "creases." This marking is often done with a caramel cutter.

Equivalent Weights and Measures.—In the work of weighing and measuring there must, as in reading the thermometer, be absolute accuracy, or results will be unsatisfactory. As some of the measures used are not to be found in every house, a table of equivalent weights and measures is here given.

1 lb. sugar	2 breakfast cupfuls.
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sugar	1 small teacupful.
1 oz. sugar	1 tablespoonful.
$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. sugar	1 dessertspoonful.
$\frac{1}{4}$ oz. sugar	1 teaspoonful.
1 oz. butter	1 dessertspoonful.
1 oz. glucose	1 dessertspoonful.
1 oz. honey	1 dessertspoonful.
1 pint water	2 small breakfast cupfuls.
$\frac{1}{2}$ pint water	1 small breakfast cupful.
1 gill water	1 small teacupful.

Small weights often go amissing, so it may be useful to know that

Three pennies weigh	1 oz.
One penny and one halfpenny weigh	$\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
One halfpenny and one farthing or one threepenny bit weigh	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz.

CHAPTER IV

SUGAR-BOILING

SUGAR may be boiled on an ordinary range, a gas-stove, or ring, and even a chafing dish can be made to do good service in the way of sweet-making.

During sugar-boiling one danger has always to be guarded against. Sugar, being originally a crystalline substance, always tends, when in the form of a syrup, to crystallize out and change from syrup to sugar crystals and water. This danger is guarded against in three ways:—

- (1) By adding to the syrup some substance, such as glucose or cream of tartar, which "greases" the sugar or makes it less likely to granulate.
- (2) By melting sugar very thoroughly before allowing syrup to boil.
- (3) By brushing round sides of pan during boiling, so as to dissolve any crystals forming there.

Any impurity or scum on the surface should be removed as soon as the syrup boils, and it may be noted that pure sugar and water show no tendency to boil over. Once the syrup has been freed of all grit and scum, the boiling may be allowed to proceed briskly till the required degree is reached.

There are seven clearly marked stages of sugar-boiling which the skilled chef can test by sight and touch, but which the amateur can only safely judge of by means of the thermometer:—

Stage 1. Pearl	220°
" 2. Thread	235°