

**Dainty Dishes of Dates.**

There is a food, very cheap and very abundant in this country, to be had of the grocer, but it is a food not extensively used, probably because of its very abundance and cheapness.

This is the date, the dried palm-fruit. It is prized at its true worth by the people of its own native country, who almost live upon its sugary substance, but strangely ignored here.

Excellent dates may be bought at sixpence the pound anywhere, and these are very suitable for cooking purposes. Less carefully packed and a little crushed, the same quality of date may be obtained cheaper, as the fruit, in these cheap cases, is all massed together.

The date is a drupe on account of its stone-containing nature. Its soft fleshy pulp contains more glucose or fruit sugar than any known fruit, except the fig, which excels it by a very little in this respect. But over six-tenths of its entire substance is pure sugar, of the grape-sugar variety, which is easier to digest than cane-sugar. Only one-fifth of its pulp is water, and it has nearly seven per cent. of flesh-making matter, in this respect being superior to the prized banana, and also to the fig itself, which has but six per cent. of fruit curd.

Though the date has so much more fibre than the banana, it has less than the fig, which contains half as much again of this indigestible material. In the case of the date, stewing softens the fibres wonderfully, and stewed dates make a most agreeable dish, eaten with milk puddings. Even prunes do not excel them for daintiness.

Though a fig may contain nearly a third more salts than dates, yet the latter hold a very fair quantity, seeing that it amounts to over one and a-half parts per hundred; therefore, those who like dates may eat them with confidence in spring, knowing that in this way they are absorbing an agreeable quantity of Nature's medicines. Dates are so nearly like figs in actual composition that it is not surprising that, in their action on the body, they are similar. A gentle laxative, and an aider of digestive action, like the date and the fig, should not be omitted from children's diet.

Most children like dates, therefore it will be found a simple matter to give them one of the most pleasant natural physics in this way at dinner daily in shape of a date dessert.

A date-shape is made by stiffening a small quantity of cream, or, failing this, milk, with gelatine, then filling up a mould with stewed dates and this jellied cream. When set the shape will turn out solid.

It is well to stone the dates before stewing. The cream should be flavoured with any essence liked.

Date jam is a novelty children enjoy. Again the fruit should be stoned before boiling. Dates can be employed in puddings in exactly the same way as raisins, and a rolly-polly nursery pudding made with this dried fruit instead of plums will be hailed with pleasure. In the winter, when fruit is scarce, the date ought to enjoy more popularity, especially where there are children. A date cake made with a thick layer of the fruit between puff-paste, makes a nice tea-dish.

In ordinary cookery it should be remembered that dates and figs go well together, also dates and rhu-

barb keep excellent company. A pie made up of equal parts of stoned dates and rhubarb baked under a crust, will be found a pleasant change in spring from the ordinary crude rhubarb-dish, as the compact substance of the date will mingle lusciously with the juicy but somewhat sour pulp of the healthful rhubarb, spring's first produce from the garden. Rhubarb and date jam is a successful mixture, and rhubarb stewed with dates is always liked better by children than rhubarb stewed alone. The dates give the "body" richness and sweetness that rhubarb undoubtedly lacks.

Dates and apples make right mixtures also. The malic acid in the apple-juice counteracts, in measure, the great sweetness of the dates, while the date softens the apple's acidity. Equal quantities of apple slices and stoned dates will take the place of jam in a rolly-polly pudding, and be welcomed as a change.

Dates in custard make an agreeable change. A ginger pudding made with dates is really hard to beat in the list of boiled puddings. A pudding basin is buttered, filled with a fairly stiff batter well flavoured with ground ginger, and the batter is made black with dates. If the batter, which, of course, has been sweetened to taste, be too thin, all the dates will go to the bottom, making a "cap" pudding. If the batter be nicely stiff, however, the dates will be dispersed through the pudding like raisins, and this is the correct mode. As ginger is a carminative and an aider of digestion, also a destroyer of flatulence, and dates are so beneficial in action, such a pudding as this is the sort to have in winter.

When there is much stale bread in the house, a date pudding, either

baked or boiled, will aid in getting rid of it. The bread is all buttered, and a layer is set in a pudding dish, then a layer of dates, then more bread, and so on to the top of the dish. All the contents are soaked through with a rich, sweet custard, then baked or boiled according to taste.

A date cake can be made for tea to take the place of plum-cake. The dates are stewed first and carefully drained, then used in the same way as raisins.

If very thick with dates, children like it all the more, but it is apt to be a little heavy when there are many dates.

**What to Wear With Them.**

A woman who has a red face will not wear emeralds. A woman with a poor complexion does not improve it by pearls.

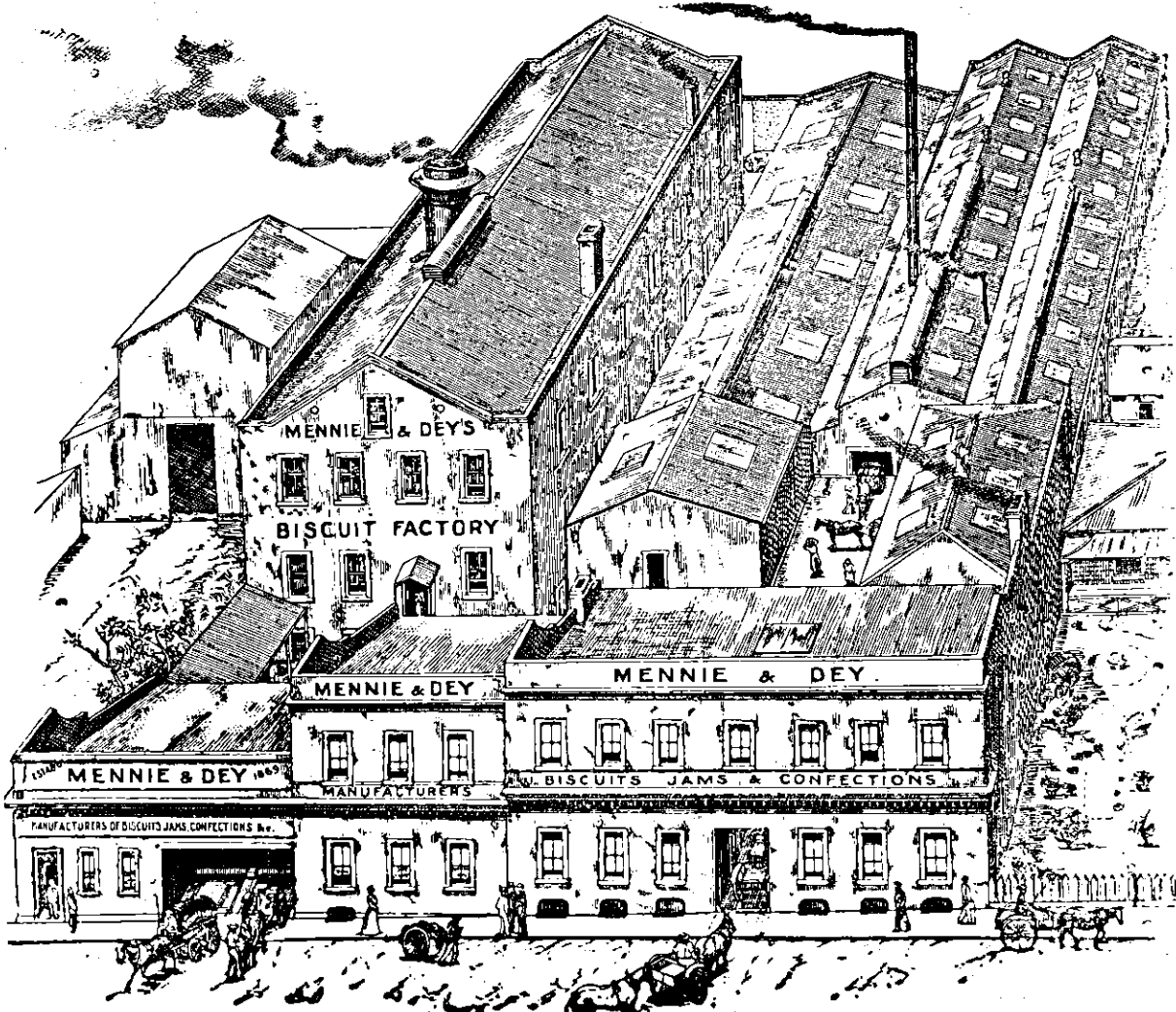
Those lovely and innocuous ornaments really derive their chief lustre from a transparent skin, as they depend largely on reflected lights. A woman whose face, however beautiful, takes greenish tints in the shadows should avoid rubies, especially pink ones, and roseate topazes.

A face may have these greenish tints without damage to beauty, remember. Every face has a great deal of green in it, as a portrait painter will tell you. Giotto painted the loveliest angels conceivable, and all his pupils made the shadows on girls' faces startlingly green, and the eyes green, too, sometimes, and yet we receive the impression of exquisite delicacy and brilliancy.

Still, red is the complimentary of green, and if the dress should be pink, and no help for it, the jewels nearer the face ought to counteract it.

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