



# BENGAL SWEETS

By  
MRS. J. HALDAR.



FIFTH EDITION.

*(Thoroughly Revised and Considerably Enlarged).*

*WITH FULL PLATE ILLUSTRATIONS.*

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE.
I. The Romance of Bengal Sweets	-- 1
II. The Confectionery of Bengal	-- 7
III. Commercial Possibilities of Bengal Sweets	-- -- 11
IV. Utensils	-- -- 14
V. Ingredients	-- -- 17
VI. Operations	-- -- 23
VII. Milk and Its Products	-- -- 33
VIII. Sugar and Syrup	-- -- 48
IX. Recipes	-- -- 52
X. Recipes—Loochi, Etc.	-- -- 55
XI. Recipes—Salt Articles	-- -- 61
XII. Recipes—Mohanbhog & Barhas	-- -- 72
XIII. Recipes—Coconut Conserves	-- -- 78
XIV. Recipes—Mithais	-- -- 83
XV. Recipes—Pantoah, Etc.	-- -- 113
XVI. Recipes—Rasagolla, Etc.	-- -- 121
XVII. Recipes—Sandesh	-- -- 131
XVIII. Recipes—Khoa & Milk Preparations	-- -- 152
XIX. Recipes—Miscellaneous	-- -- 162
XX. Preservation of Sweets	-- -- 167
Conclusion	-- -- 169
Glossary	-- -- 170
General Index	-- -- 171

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

IT will be no exaggeration to state that my book has proved to be a standard treatise on the subject. As typifying the immense popularity it enjoys, it would suffice to cite a single instance. A European lady in Calcutta became so much enamoured of Bengal Sweets that she requested me to recommend to her a suitable confectioner who might practically teach her the technique of their preparation. In fact she engaged his services for nearly two months and paid handsome remuneration to him.

Since the last edition of my book the confectionery of Bengal has made rapid strides. There are now many progressive confectioners in the city preparing and selling Bengal Sweets under superb hygienic conditions so as to make them more popular with Europeans. The place of honour in this respect should go to Messrs. K. C. Das, Esplanade Corner, Calcutta, the cynosure of all sweet loving people. To them also belongs the credit of being the pioneer confectioners to succeed in offering for sale preserved sweets in vacuum-packed tins—so that the Royal pair of Bengal Sweets—viz., *Rasagolla* and *Sandesh* may be now relished in their pristine delicacy in any part of the world.

Moreover, these progressive confectioners are creating novelties from day to day to keep abreast of times. In fact their menu on ceremonious occasions proves inexhaustible in variety. While some of these are really innovations, others are merely metamorphoses of old ones. I have, however, selected about a dozen new varieties and added their

recipes in appropriate places. In this connection I have received considerable assistance from Messrs. Nag Brothers of 229, Chittaranjan Avenue, North Calcutta who thoroughly deserve the reputation they have earned as manufacturers of dainty sweets.

Lastly, in the course of my tour throughout India, particularly in the South, I have been convinced of the immense possibility of introducing Bengal Sweets outside Bengal. Extensive markets can be created in different provincial cities and towns and huge profits earned. Indeed good fortune awaits enterprising young men. Hence the newly added chapter on the subject.

#### THE AUTHORESS.

*The 2nd January, 1941.*

#### PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

When I was first requested to compile my recipes for Bengal sweets in a book form I had considerable misgivings. I applied myself to the task with great diffidence. But the very warm reception the book was welcomed with has now encouraged me beyond measure. The recognition that the sweet-meats of my country have merited at the hands of persons not familiar with the cookery of this country is very gratifying. More so when I realise that the recipes I have prescribed have been fairly successful. I am thus emboldened to bring out a second edition which is a considerable improvement on the first. In fact, I have thoroughly rewritten it.

The spontaneous manifestation of the popularity of the book is demonstrated by the insistent demand for it among all sorts of people. The book has made its way not only to different parts of India but also

to the United Kingdom. Indeed I feel legitimate pride to learn that the *Rasagolla* has been successfully prepared in far-off England with the help of this book and that Europeans stationed in this country enjoyed *Sandesh*, themselves making the same.

The book has therefore been so modified as to assist even the foreigners in easily comprehending the processes and in preparing the sweets according to the recipes without encountering the least difficulties..

As its name implies this book is confined to the confectionery of Bengal and, therefore, the recipes of sweets current in other parts of India must not be expected herein. As a digression the therapeutic values of certain preparations have been touched upon just to make their utility more apparent.

I take this opportunity of acknowledging my indebtedness and recording my gratefulness to Babu Nibaran Chandra Chakrabarty, Calcutta, who is a recognised expert in Bengali confectionery. Without his willing co-operation such a thorough revision would have been impossible. I have also received help from Messrs. Panchanan Bhandar, sweetmeat vendors, 1, Swallow Lane, Calcutta.

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CALCUTTA.

MRS. J. HALDAR.

June, 1926.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE ROMANCE OF BENGAL SWEETS.

**I**N the wide realm of confectionery Bengal has attained the same unique position with regard to the whole of India as Italy appears to hold on the Continent of Europe. In no other part of this vast Peninsula will be found such a wide range of confectionery as is to be met with in this sweet Province flowing with "milk and honey." And the reason is not far to seek. For even in the National Anthem of Bengal poignant allusion is made to the "sweet air, sweet water, sweet corns and sweet fruits" of the Motherland.

The sweet tooth of Bengal is proverbial. Indeed the great role that Bengal Sweets play in the social life of the Bengali people will be realised when it is said that no dish is complete without them even in daily courses; that the lunch is entirely composed of them, that every menu is enjoined to be "finished with sweets," that the importance and gravity of every festivity is to be measured by the quantity of sweets consumed, and that the wealth of the aristocracy is gauged by the length of days for which *bhiyan* (having the sweets prepared at home

by paid confectioners on ceremonial occasions) is continued without break.

In Bengal, sweets have been identified with cordiality and amity to an amazing extent. Whenever there is a friend of the family in the house, he or she may take leave only after "sweetening the mouth." The index of honour shown to invited guests is furnished by the variety and superiority of the sweets offered in their entertainment. Sweets have also been accepted as an emblem of hospitality by every stratum of society in every part of Bengal. Go to the remotest village and ask for a glass of water simply. You will have it sure, but not without sweets—be they a few pieces of sugarcandy or fondants (*batasa*). Even the humblest cottager will bring out a spoonful of jaggery and insist on justice being done to it in quenching the thirst.

Especially the Bengali ladies are so solicitous of sweet relations that they will not hand over anything but sweet substances—scrupulously eschewing sour and bitter things—directly to any one for fear of estrangement. In entertaining the new son-in-low no salt is to be served to him, for it might embitter the relation for sooth. Instead sugar is allowed with which to season his foods ! In welcoming the new bride in her husband's home the mother-in-law offers her a bit of honey so that no cross-

words might pass between themselves in future housekeeping.

The influence that sweets have exercised on the Bengali language can be easily traced. The vernacular word *Sandesh* originally meant "news," but with long usage it has come to designate primarily 'sweets' because, admittedly there is no better way of wishing good health and prosperity to our friends and relatives than by sending them sweets. Again whenever one has to enquire about the news of any relative or acquaintance it has become customary to send sweets along with the enquiry. So that the Bengali word *tattwa* (enquiry) has come to signify "presents of sweets". Similarly whenever we have to express our pleasure, gratitude or appreciation, or have to congratulate any one in some tangible form we send sweets with compliments and there is occasion for it every month. To mention only a few : in summer sweets accompany presentation of mangoes; in winter that of oranges; and so on and so forth. Thus, if we may be permitted to adapt a very pregnant expression, "we say it with sweets" in every case.

Bengal sweets have enriched Bengali literature by originating phrases and idioms and by forming themes for descriptive feasts. There are copious references to them in the poems and writings of medieval Bengal. The professional confectioner of Bengal has earned

the nickname of BHOLA MOIRA. Paradoxical as it may appear he falls shy of his own hand-products thereby giving rise to the proverb "confectioners do not eat *sandesh*." They are so much fed up with it that "familiarity breeds indifference" in this case. When any one refers to anything sarcastically covering caustic remarks under grab of sweet expressions one is said to inflict a "dagger of sugar-candy." The honeyed words of a mealy-mouthed person are referred to both in their general and ironical sense. The mind of a hypocrite and designing person has been fitly compared to the "maze of a *jilapi*." It is as intricate.

Sweets have come to acquire a conventional significance in all religious observances in Bengal. They figure conspicuously in all sacred offerings which, in the minimum, must consist of "Rice, plantain and *sandesh*." As an example of the high esteem in which Bengal sweets are held, of all other foodstuffs, it may be mentioned that the Brahmins, the priesthood of India, will not accept any eatables other than sweets at the hands of the members of other castes so as to safeguard themselves from 'pollution.' Whenever one has to observe penance or atone for uncleanliness or prepare for religious rites or in similar other circumstances, one has to subsist mainly on sweets, the protector of purity.

As we have said before, sweets constitute an important item in all religious ceremonies. During the Durga Puja, the greatest Hindu festival of Bengal, heaps of sweets are to be seen all round for practically a week. After the immersion ceremony of the Durg Puja, it is customary to salute and embrace one and all with a view to forgive and forget every previous lapse and to condone all the wrongs even of foes and critics. And to cement the bond of friendship thus renewed and as an essential feature of the day's function (*Bijoya*), sweets are freely offered—which cannot be denied on any pretext whatsoever—to sweeten the relation and establish cordiality for the rest of the year. In Dewali the "festival of lights," there is a spontaneous display of sweets in heaps on all sides, preparations for which are taken in hand a long time in advance. In *Bhaiphonta*, which is a convention observed by the sisters for the longevity of their brothers, sweets constitute a main item. Observed nowhere else in the world—*Jamai Sasthi* is the happiest day in the year for the sons-in-law of Bengal ! It connotes felicitations offered by the father-in-law or their families in the shape of clothes, fruits and sweets. But woe betide the father-in-law whose selection and choice of sweets prove deficient in variety and grandeur, for upon this primary factor depends the pleasure or displeasure of his darling son-in-law.

Bengal sweets are not immune from mysticism and superstition. As an illustration *Dahi* is considered as auspicious whether in setting out on a long journey or in putting forth a proposal of marriage.

The most important function of Bengal sweets, however, still remains to be mentioned. After all that is said above, it is to be presumed that a large portion of the mutual presents exchanged between the contracting parties in a marriage consists of sweets. It were idle to endeavour to portray in a few words the magnitude and splendour of the bridal paraphernalias of both sides. Suffice it to say that the sweets are conveyed, artistically displayed on trays and baskets and decorously covered with fancy embroidered napkins, by a long queue of retinues arrayed in red, the token of joy !

But to crown all there is the very piquant Bengali saying, which is oft quoted, that in a betrothal "the bride desires beauty (of the groom), the mother hankers after his wealth, the father seeks his attainments, the friends wish respectability but the lay people long for sweets only."

And thus it is that in Bengal the advent of any noteworthy event in the family or in the society is heralded by the unlimited provision for and unrestricted distribution of—SWEETS.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE CONFECTIONERY OF BENGAL.

IN Bengal the art of confectionery has reached the highwater mark of perfection. One will be astonished to learn how certain sweets have acquired well-deserved fame in association with noted places. A few instances enjoying considerable celebrity are cited for guidance.

Dacca is generally famed for *Mithais* of distinction and novelty; Burdwan for *Sitabhog* and *Mihidana*; Maldah for *Khaja*; Janai for *Monohar*; Natore for *Kanchagolla*; Murshidabad for *Pantoah* and *Rasagolla*; Krishnagore for *Sarpuria* and *Sarbajra*; Muragacha for *Chhanar Jilapi* and so on.

The nearest claim to similar popularity is preferred by the United Provinces but even then, in many fundamentals, it lags considerably behind Bengal. Probably next in importance stands Northern India where *Hulwas* and *Laddoos* are a speciality and much prized for their substance and solidarity.

That confectionery is a living art in Bengal is evinced by the facts that upcountry sweets are assimilated in modified forms, e.g.,

*Laddoos* and *Hulwas*; that novel varieties are from time to time added to the long list, e.g., *Rajbhog*; and that on memorable occasions new sweets are invented and offered for sale, e.g., *Delhi Durbar*, *Jubilee Gaja*. The nomenclature is thus often an interesting study of contemporary history, to wit, *Lady Canning*. Hundreds of varieties are offered by progressive confectioners on ceremonial occasions and some of the names are particularly adapted to captivate European imagination: such as, Emerald Puff, French Chop, Victory, Royal Sweet, Golden Egg, Irish Cutlet, Roseade, Queen's Own, Swiss Chocolate, Italian Cake, etc.

As a rule Bengali nomenclature has been adopted throughout the book though some sweet-meats are better known by their Hindi names, e.g., *Laroo* is the Bengali for *Laddoo* in Hindi. Where necessary Hindi equivalents have been included. Also where possible literal English meanings have been indicated. Furthermore, in order to avoid ambiguity, vernacular names have been pursued for a number of ingredients, there being scarcely adequate English expressions to designate them: the most noticeable instances are '*Chhana*' and '*Khoa*'.

The sweetmeats of Bengal properly fall under two main categories; viz., (1) *Mithai* and (2) *Monda*. While the basic ingredients

of the former are flour and pulses, those of the latter are milk and its products. The former are generally fried in ghee while the latter are simply cooked: all of them, of course, are sweetened with sugar.

To these, however, there are numerous adjuncts, some of which are included in this book, such as the salt articles which have come to be associated with sweetmeats; and the milk preparations which really fall under domestic cookery. There is an order of precedence of serving Bengal sweets which must not be overlooked. First come salt articles, next *mithai*, then sops, after that *monda* and finally milk preparations.

There is no end to the shape and size of Bengal sweets. As to shape there are the triangle, square, oblong, diamond, oval and circle. These are all thin laminas. In solids there are the cube, round, ovoid, tablet and the like. Combination effects are numerous. Some of them are folded while others are moulded. The size of the sweets is determined arbitrarily by a certain number of them going to make up a certain weight, say, a dozen to a pound. Last but not least, the forms of the sizes and shapes cover a wide range.

Most of the Bengal sweets are prepared at home by prudent housewives and freshly served in tiffin, lunch or breakfast and constitute

substantial repast. They take the place of biscuits, cakes, chocolates, etc., in the Bengali household.

It will be apposite in this connection to say one or two words about the keeping properties of the sweets. The salt articles are best served hot, otherwise they are not much relished afterwards. The *mithais* as a rule keep for 2 or 3 days. But the *mondas* do not keep well for more than one day. Hard cooked *sandesh* does not deteriorate for an exceptionally long period, say, a week or more. Broadly speaking, there is no harm in using home-made sweets for 2 or 3 days. It should be remembered that sugar is a good natural preservative.

Bengal sweets are nothing if not original and ingenious. The factors which contribute to their success are careful attention and skilful manipulation. In addition an extraordinary degree of patience and diligence is called for. In short, Bengal sweets can be made to satisfaction only by being fastidious and pains-taking.

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## CHAPTER III.

### COMMERCIAL POSSIBILITIES OF BENGAL SWEETS.

**B**ENGAL Sweets are primarily intended for treating friends, relatives and guests but apart from aesthetic consideration they have commercial utilities too. It will be no exaggeration to say that Bengal sweets are given preference to by many non-Bengali races and highly prized by European and other foreigners even. Moreover, Bengali Colonies are to be met with in every part of India. It may be safely assumed therefore that shops for the preparation and sale of Bengal sweets will enjoy a wide clientele everywhere.

Indeed, there is evidence to show that adventurous Indian confectioners have started and successfully conducted confectionery business in foreign lands. It is on record that when such an enterprising Indian opened a sweetmeat shop in the Paris International Exhibition his hot *jilabis* were so much in demand that he sold each for a shilling and even then he could not meet the exorbitant demand. Even now an Indian gentleman is conducting a restaurant in the heart of London while

Bengal sweets are finding prominent mention in the menus of different restaurants and cafes.

Some of the well-known varieties of Bengal sweets are now-a-days being preserved and made available in remote parts of and even exported to foreign countries. Experiments were being carried out in this direction for a pretty long time and at last individual efforts have been crowned with success. Full advantage has been taken of the latest technological development in the scientific preservation of food and up-to-date technique has been applied to industrial uses. As a result, *sandesh*, *rasagollah*, *pantoah*, etc. are now packed in vacuum tins and are available in every part of the world, which is no mean achievement. Several noted confectioners are deriving huge profits thereby and incidentally spreading the fame of Bengal sweets far and wide.

Another factor of supreme importance which has proved helpful to the development of trade in Bengal sweets is the wide use of cold storage. Large and reputable confectionery shops are now-a-days mostly equipped with refrigerators and the sweets stored in them have proved immensely popular. Ice cream *Sandesh* which used to be a rare commodity in former times is very commonly available now. Then there are Ice cream *Rasagollah*, *Pantoah*, *Dahi*, etc., etc. Needless to add that these

iced sweets are evry much relished by everyone—particularly in the summer season when one feels parched and thirsty after a hard day's toil. Then it is that the sweet sops served direct from cold storage are welcomed in-deep and smooths the system at once.

Transport of sweets between distant places has also been made possible inasmuch as refrigerators are now fitted in many important Railways and Steamers and particularly in sea-going vessels. Full advantage may be taken of these storing facilities in building up trade in sweets with different parts of India as well as foreign countries. -

Further more, in view of the fact that speedy air communications have been established between India, England and other foreign countries Bengal sweets may be exported for the use of the people of those lands. *Sandesh* of the *karapak* variety packed in *slopping* paper may surely be sent to different countries by this means, and they will be in great demand by aristocrats and rich men generally. A lucrative export trade may be easily built up in this manner. Some of the other varieties may also be sent by the regular steamships. As indicated above refrigerators will prove helpful in this connection. Packed and stored prudently there is hardly any fear of the sweets deteriorating or being spoilt.

## CHAPTER IV.

### UTENSILS.

FOR the convenience of those readers who are not familiar with the utensils required for the preparation of the Bengali sweets, these are described briefly. It will be seen that some of them are of peculiar shape and construction.

I. Of Pans the following kinds are in vogue :—

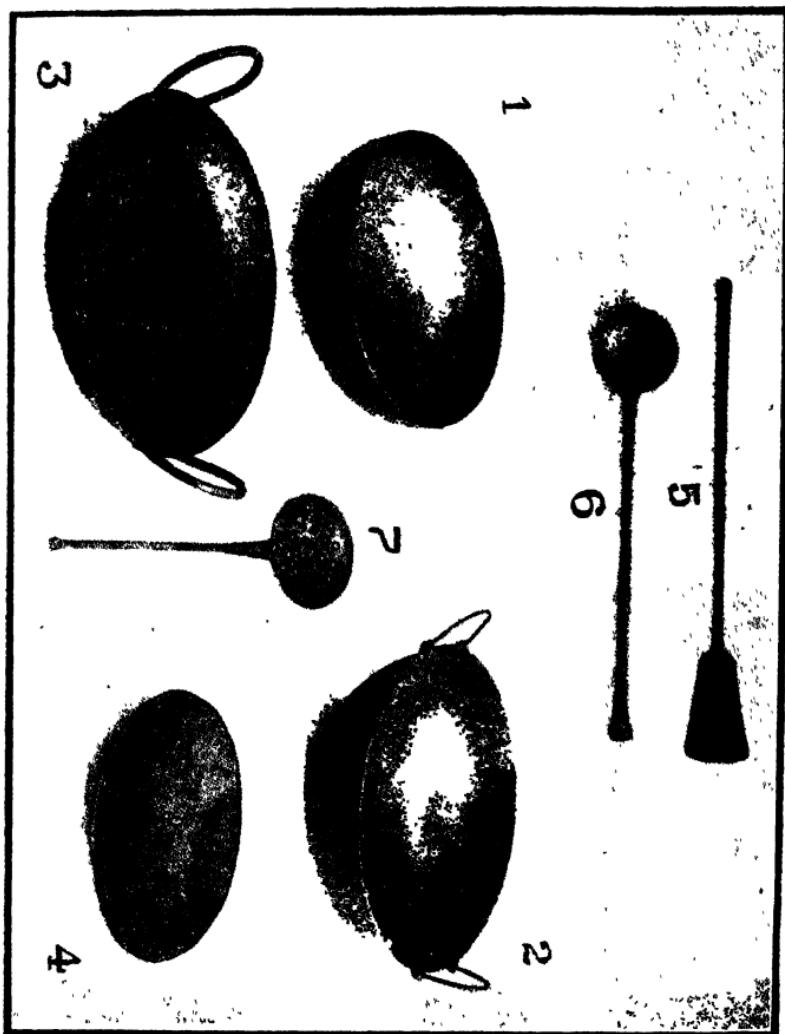
- (a) *Khola*, a deep pan for boiling liquids.
- (b) *Karha*, a shallow pan for frying solids in deep liquid.
- (c) *Tai*, a flat pan with two-inch high edge (rim) all round for special frying.
- (d) *Taoa*, a flat pan slightly curved in the middle used for baking, sauteing, etc.

The second and the fourth are, however, more generally used than the others.

II. Of *Ladies* there are also several types :—

- (a) *Hata*, or a ladle proper for agitating liquids. A hollow cup attached at the end of a handle.

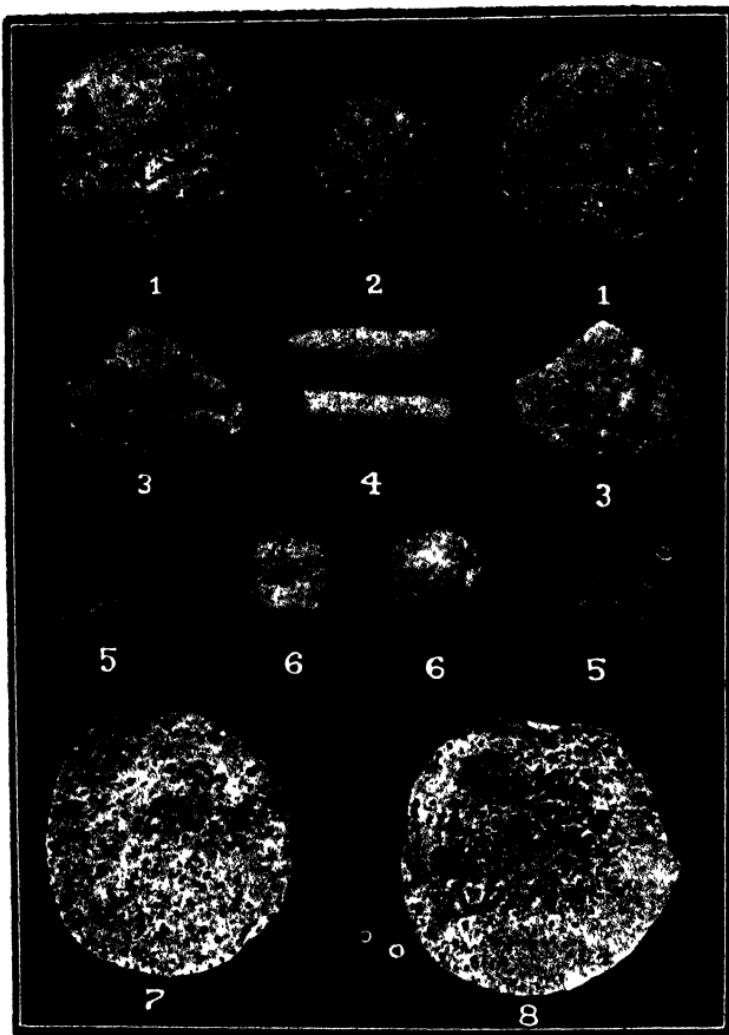
## PANS AND LADLES.



1. Ka-ho, 2. Whola, 3. Tei, 4. Tiaoa, 5. Khunti,  
6. Hata, and 7. Jhanjra.

[To face p. 14]

## SALT ARTICLES.



1. Kachuri,
2. Kachuri (small's),
3. Nimki,
4. Nun Gaja,
5. Singara,
6. Khasta Kachuri,
7. Dal Pooree,
8. Radhaballav.

[Ref. p. 61.]

- (b) *Jhanjra*, or a skimmer for skimming liquids, removing scums, etc. A flat circular disc with numerous pores attached at the end of a handle.
- (c) *Khunti*, or a spatula for turning solids, for basting, etc. A thin blade with a long handle.
- (d) *Taru*, or a wooden paddle with a broad thick blade. This is used particularly for making a *sandesh* and generally stirring pasty masses on a big scale. Similar to Scotch Hand.
- (e) *Kathi*, or a simple stick, either of wood or of iron.

III. Of the *Accessories* the following are required :—

- (1) *Chaki*—a pastry board. A wooden or marble circular disc mounted on a tripod and a foot or so in diameter.  
*Belun*—a rolling pin. A cylindrical wooden roller one foot long. The one is the complement of the other.  
*Pata* is a wooden plank 3 ft. long, 9 inches broad and 1 inch thick used as a pastry board for rolling out dough on greased surface.

- (2) *Sil*—a slab,  
*Nora*—a muller;  
both of stone with cutting ridges  
(toothed notches) like that of a  
file. Employed for braying solids  
to a paste or for grating to a pulp.
- (3) *Hamandista*—mortar and pestle  
of iron for pounding.
- (4) *Janta*—the millstone for grinding  
pulse meal, etc.

IV. Of *appliances* the following will be serviceable : viz., trivets, tom tom, etc.

V. Of miscellaneous utensils the following articles must be kept handy :—

- (1) Knife, fork, scraper, beater, spoon.
- (2) Colander.
- (3) Cup, bowl, dish, platter.

As a rule the utensils are of iron, though now-a-days enamelled and aluminium wares are coming into vogue. To attain cleanliness, it is preferable to set apart a complete set of utensils for confectionery only. Otherwise the kitchen utensils should be thoroughly scoured and cleansed. In Bengal earthen wares and stone wares are employed in storing sweets. Brasswares are not safe to use in every case. Glasswares may be preferred but they are brittle. Wooden utensils, like platter, etc., are very handy, while wicker-work baskets, say in lieu of colanders are extremely serviceable.

## CHAPTER V.

### INGREDIENTS.

NATURALLY enough, the quality of the sweets is determined by the proper choice of the ingredients entering into their composition. These should, therefore, be always pure, fresh and of tip-top quality.

- (1) *Khasa* or flour of the first quality.  
(By flour always wheat flour is meant).
- (2) *Suji* or semolina : the coarser grains in flour making.
- (3) *Ghee* is obtained by melting butter and boiling to free it from water. It is unknown outside India. It is the only fatty substance employed in frying sweets and in shortening flour.
- (4) *Safeda* or rice flour. This is the meal of the best sunned rice (not parboiled) *Kamini* with its characteristic sweet and delicate aroma and delightful taste.
- (5) *Besan* or pulse meal. This should be fresh milled, otherwise it becomes musty and clotty. The two kinds

- obtained by grinding gram (*chana*) and field pea (*matar*) are common.
- (6) *Pulses*, *Kalai* (Urid in Hindi) and *mung* (green gram) are the two other pulses employed. Split halves and unhusked pulses are to be preferred always.
- (7) *Mewa*. This term comprises such articles as almonds, pistachios, raisins and the like. Before using they are shelled and steeped in water, then skinned and shredded. If required urgently they may be blanched by scalding in hot water. Raisins are simply picked, washed and stalked.
- (8) *Fruits*. The fruits used in making confections are few in number : (1) Coconut, (2) Papaw, (3) Bael or Quince, and (4) Pumpkin.
- (9) *Flavouring Agents*. Both cardamom major and minor (*bara elaich* and *chhota elaich*) are used to impart their characteristic flavour to the sweets. Only their seeds are employed either whole or bruised. Camphor, asafoetida, etc., are also used but only in special cases.
- (10) *Perfuming Agents*. Rose water and otto are the popular perfuming

agents. Mango ginger, lemon peel, etc., are employed in special cases.

Perfuming or flavouring agents are added in very minute doses, otherwise the ingredients will be embittered.

Good result is obtained by using artificial essences like those of orange, banana, pine-apple, mango, etc., (chemically known as amyl acetate, etc.). They are quite harmless. Also musk, vanilla, etc.

- (11) *Colouring Agents.* Saffron or *Zaf-ran* is employed for rich chestnut colour. It is used after blending in warm milk. Genuine unadulterated saffron should be procured. A cheap substitute for saffron is turmeric used for yellow. Cochineal is used for red. Pistachio brayed to a paste with water is used for green.

Now-a-days, however, cheap vegetable dye-stuffs are employed as colouring agents. Always edible colours should be used.

- (12) *Condiments* which are ordinarily used for seasoning curries, stews, soups, etc., comprise turmeric, mustard, coriander, cumin seed, black pepper, chillies, etc. They are em-

ployed in the form of a paste. The prescribed condiments are wetted and brayed on a stone slab (*sil*) with a muller stone (*nora*) until a uniform paste is obtained. Before application the paste is blended in a little water. Powdered condiments, sold in the market, do not give quite satisfactory results. The whole condiments should be picked and washed.

- (13) *Spices.* Aniseed, caraway, fenugreek, ginger, parsley, etc., are some of the spices which are used for miscellaneous purposes, either bruised, brayed or singed. In the special group known as Hot Spices are included cardamom minor, cloves, cinnamon and cassia leaves taken collectively. They are preferred for their rich odoriferous properties. They may be either singed whole in ghee or oil in which the cooking is to be done subsequently, or stirred in powder form in the cooked product when removed from the fire and covered up. Sometimes the ordinary spices are dried by baking or roasting and then pounded. The 'hot spices' are usually bruised in the mortar.

- (14) The more costly and aristocratic varieties of sweetmeats are often embellished for spectacular effect with rose petals, silver leaf, gold leaf, etc. The metal foils are chosen as thin and fine as possible but zinc and bronze substitutes should be totally refused as being harmful. The former may be eaten up without the slightest hesitation.
- (15) *Soda Bicarb*, which is the abbreviation for bicarbonate of sodium, is added to flour as shortening agent (in addition to the usual ghee) to make the products exceptionally flaky and friable.
- (16) Mustard oil is employed for frying specially salt-articles which become more tasty with it than with ghee. It is ready for frying when it smokes.
- (17) *Sathi* (or Zedoary) is a starch product like arrowroot. It is made from the rhizomes of *curcuma zedoaria* growing in Eastern Bengal. It furnishes a light but substantial repast. It is sold in the marked packed in tins like barley.
- (18) For the purpose of confectionery coconuts are always to be selected fully ripe. There is a thick kernel inside

them. This is scraped with an iron scraper. "Copra" is the dried meat of coconut. Where fresh coconut is not available copra may be used but it must be soaked in water previously.

- (19) *Binding Agent.* Often a binding agent is required to be mixed with *chhana* and *khoa* to maintain the shape and form of the sweets which otherwise may crumble during subsequent operations. For this purpose Arrowroot is primarily used though flour or *Suji* is also employed.
- (20) By far the most important ingredients entering into the composition of Bengal sweets are milk and its products and sugar and syrup. These two items are, therefore, treated more elaborately in separate places.

## CHAPTER VI.

### OPERATIONS.

MUCH of the success in preparing sweets depends upon the careful manipulation of the processes. No pains have been spared in describing in sufficient details and in proper places, the operations that are required to be undergone by the different products. Nevertheless to give a fair idea of these operations at the very outset the following general observations are made.

#### TREATMENT OF THE FLOUR.

The adequate treatment of flour has an important bearing on the products known as *Mithai*.

#### *Shortening.*

The prescribed quantity of flour is measured on a wooden platter. Before wetting it a certain quantity of ghee is invariably rubbed in, for shortening. This is very important and cannot be omitted on any pretext. As bread is made light and porous by leavening with yeast, so sweets are made tender and crisp by shortening with ghee (or butter). The usual proportion is 3 to 4 oz. of ghee for every pound

of flour. For ordinary purposes when the products are required to be tender only, a lower proportion may suffice but when the sweets are required to be flaky a higher proportion will be necessary.

To shorten the flour the desired amount of ghee is melted and sprinkled all over the flour and then rubbed in with the fingers to break the lumps or clots.

### *Kneading.*

The flour is then formed into a ring and a sufficient quantity of water poured in the hollow. Usually 4 to 6 oz. water will suffice to wet 1 lb. of flour. The flour is then kneaded thoroughly into smooth lithe dough.

The softness of the product depends to a certain extent on the quantity of water added and the time devoted for kneading. The dough will be improved by employing as little water as possible, nevertheless making up the deficiency by long and hard kneading.

### *Forming.*

To facilitate easy working, the dough, if bulky enough, is divided into several batches, each being worked in turn.

The dough is then turned out, given a quick vigorous additional kneading to complete smoothness and neatly done up. It is next

drawn out with oiled hands. Snatch out from one end pellets of the size of an egg. Roll them under hands into rounds and flatten with the pressure of the palms. The pellets are thus "formed."

If there is any delay in proceeding further with the pellets or if the weather is excessively hot cover them with a piece of moist cloth, otherwise they will dry up and crack. The pellets are rolled out as and when required, for on long standing the spreads will jumble together and be spoilt.

### *Rolling Out.*

Take these formed pieces one by one, dredge with flour (instead of flouring the board), flatten by pressing with fingers and roll out to the required thinness usually one-eighth inch. It requires great dexterity and practice in rolling out the pellets to perfectly circular shape (without cutting or punching out). Gentle but uniform pressure is to be applied with the rolling pin and the flattened pieces are contrived to revolve on the board exposing fresh surface under the pin, so that the circles are perfect in shape and uniform in thickness.

In certain cases, however, the lumps of dough are rolled out with oiled board and pin to the desired thickness and the spread is then cut into square or cubical tablets and then pro-

ceeded with. On these occasions no dry flour is allowed as it will spoil the ghee in frying delicate stuffs.

For the preparation of *Mithai* the pastry board and the rolling pin are invariably greased with ghee.

### *Shaping of Sweets.*

After undergoing all the necessary treatments the 'mass' of any sweetmeat has to be converted into several 'units.' For this purpose the stuff, when completed, is divided into a number of pellets, each of which is then given its appropriate shape by forming, binding or moulding.

### **PULP, PASTE AND BATTER.**

### *Pulses and Cereals.*

Unhusked split pulses should be used whenever possible, otherwise they may be ground through *Janta* (mill-stone). Pulses become tender by steeping in water for 6 or 8 hours which may be done overnight. The husks, if any, can then be removed from the soaked pulses easily by hard rasping in several changes of water. The blanched pulses are finally washed clean and grated to a pulp.

When there is no time for softening the pulse by steeping, it may be softened by boiling

in water for half an hour or more and then mashed to a paste.

### *Granting Or Braying.*

Paste and pulp are obtained by grating or braying suitable materials on the stone slab with the muller stone. Soft substances like peas, steeped pulses, etc., yield by themselves a soft pulp on being brayed. But in braying dry substances like condiments a little water should be sprinkled from time to time to form a paste. When a great degree of fineness is required the paste and pulp may be brayed once or twice again.

### *Grating Or Braying.*

In the preparation of batter from any meal there are two factors to be looked into: viz., the measure of water and the manner of whisking. The meal is first kneaded into a dough with as little water as possible and is gradually thinned down by sprinkling water during whisking. The exact quantity of water required depends upon the consistency of the batter required—both of which should be determined by experience. After beating for 10 to 15 minutes the stuff becomes light and foamy. As a test, put a drop on a cupful of water; if it sinks beat for some time more, but if it floats it is all right. Always beat to stiff froth. It is superfluous

to add that the quality of the product depends upon the pains taken in making the batter. When properly done, the subsequent fried product will be light and spongy; it will be cooked right up to the interior and will be soaked in and out on immersion in any stock liquid.

The batter is made in different consistencies. A thin batter will flow easily from the lip of a cup and is good for spreading. A thick batter will serve admirably for fritters, and a drop batter for pills and globules. Usually the batter is smooth and rather firm like soft butter.

### *Khami Or Batch.*

*Khami* denotes the basis of any sweetmeat in the form of pulp, paste or batter. It may be conveniently designated as 'foundation-pulp,' 'foundation-paste' or foundation-batter.'

### STUFFING AND FILLING.

In the preparation of stuffings from cereals, pulses, or vegetables they are properly cooked and seasoned with condiments and spices as directed. They must not be sloppy on cooling, for then the dough will be moistened. In stuffing pastries the joints should be carefully fluted and made up to prevent them from bulging out or giving way in cooking.

In the preparation of fillings from *khoa*, *mewa*, etc., the ingredients are properly incor-

porated and perfumed and flavoured. The mass is divided into pellets which are duly filled in and the opening carefully closed up and fluted.

#### METHODS OF COOKING.

The distinction between the different methods of cooking adopted should be carefully noted.

1. *Bake*—To prepare food by cooking in a dry heat, either in an oven or under coals, or on heated stone or metal.

2. *Roast*—To cook by exposure to radiant heat before a fire; or by surrounding with hot embers, ashes, sand, etc.

3. *Singe*—To burn superficially.

Used in a special sense in connection with spices which when singed in ghee impart to it their characteristic aroma. This, in its turn, is subsequently absorbed by any stuff cooked in it.

4. *Coddle*—To parboil, to soften by boiling.

5. *Stew*—To boil slowly or to cook in a little liquid over a gentle fire, without boiling.

6. *Baste*—To moisten with melted butter fat, or other liquid to prevent burning and to add flavour.

7. *Saute*—To fry lightly and quickly in a little hot fat while being frequently turned over.

8. *Fry*—To cook in a pan or on a griddle, esp., with the use of fat, butter, oil, by heating over a fire: to cook in boiling lard or fat.

9. *Boil*—To subject to the action of heat in a boiling liquid for cooking.

Of course all of the above methods are not pursued distinctly but the principle can be easily traced in many instances. Their application should therefore be clearly understood.

Hot pans, etc., when removed from the fire should be placed on a trivet on the ground.

#### FRYING.

By far the most critical stage in the preparation of flour pastries is involved in frying. On the one hand, the articles must not get scorched by strong heat and on the other, they must not remain raw owing to insufficient heat. The merits and demerits of a sweetmeat will depend to a large extent on whether it is properly cooked or over-cooked, un-cooked or half-cooked.

The best course is to have a moderate fire, unless otherwise stipulated. Whenever necessary the fire may also be damped with a fire damper—a circular earthenware disc with an aperture in the middle. The point to be noted in actual frying is that while thin substances may be fried rapidly, the thick ones must be fried slowly. This is to allow time for the fat

to penetrate into the interior and cook in and out uniformly. On no pretext whatsoever should the articles be thrown in the pan unless the ghee is quite ready which is known when it smokes. Otherwise the ghee will froth and the products will be tough.

In frying delicate stuffs, melt the ghee on a frying pan and when it bubbles up remove from fire to the ground. Stir the molten ghee briskly by raising and pouring with the skimmer. The temperature of the whole mass will be equalised thereby. Then throw in the articles to be fried and allow to simmer. When the ebullition ceases put the pan on the fire but bring it down again as soon as the ghee bubbles up. No doubt this involves labour and time, but the articles fried in this manner become short and crisp.

The articles are mostly fried in deep pan (about 4 to 6 ins.) according to the content of the pan, of course with notable exceptions. The ghee for frying purpose is, therefore, taken in excess but the residue that is left over may be utilised in making curries, etc. The colour of fried articles range from light fawn to deep buff.

In frying do not try to exceed the capacity of the pan or of the frying medium. If necessary the mass may be fried in one or more batches, allowing ample room for each bit. Never crowd too much at a time.

In this deep frying 12 oz. of ghee will be required for every lb. of flour ; and 2 oz. of ghee for every lb. of *chhana*. But in the former case about 2 lbs. of ghee is to be provided for and in the latter case 8 oz. to ensure efficient frying.

## CHAPTER VII.

### MILK AND ITS PRODUCTS.

**M**ILK is the only perfect food. It is the only food that contains in itself all the elements necessary to physical growth and mental development. Indeed it has been rightly called "the nectar of life." But it is only fresh, clean and pure milk that is a beneficent food.

In this respect cow's milk is most important and in the pure and fresh state most nourishing. Buffalo milk is richer in cream and therefore heavy. The products of the former are universally employed for making sweet-meats though those of the latter are preferred in some cases.

By special treatment several important products are obtained from milk, one or the other of which almost invariably enters as a basic ingredient in the composition of sweet-meats. Method of preparing each of them is given below. In every case, before scalding the milk, it should be strained, preferably through a piece of close-woven cloth, like cheese cloth.

#### SAR OR CREAMY LAYERS.

When milk is boiled and left to cool undisturbed, a thin film of creamy layer forms on

the surface of the liquid. This is known as *sar*, which may be identified with 'clotted cream.' Thicker layers can be obtained as follows. Boil the milk for a longer period than usual, agitating constantly with a ladle (raising and pouring) to ensure a heaving froth. The more voluminous the froth, the greater the thickness of the layer. If the foam be unmanageable and boils over, sprinkle water and it will subside. When the milk is nearly reduced to half, leave the pan on the expired oven to cool in 4 or 5 hours. Gradual slowing down of the fire will cause a sufficiently thick layer to form on the surface of the cooling milk. Be sure that the fire is dying, otherwise the milk will be scorched.

#### **CREAM AND BUTTER.**

When milk is churned cream is separated; by ripening cream butter is obtained. These processes are too well known to need any elaborate description here. But in this country neither of these two articles is much cared for. The most extensive use that is made of similar milk product is that of ghee, which has been shortly defined as 'clarified butter.'

#### **GHEE.**

Ghee is obtained by melting butter in heat until the watery portion contained in it is expelled. For clarifying and graining, one or

two betel leaves or lemon plant leaves may be singed in the melted butter which should be then filtered through cloth. The ghee solidifies on cooling. Pure cow's ghee should have a rich chestnut colour, a uniform granular appearance and its characteristic aroma and flavour. Taken daily in small adequate dose it enriches the blood, builds up nerves, strengthens the body in general and in particular sharpens the eyes and the brain. On the other hand, pure buffalo ghee is white. It is also granular to an extent, but the flavour is not so marked. It is, however, generally employed for frying operations, when it serves the purpose better than cow's ghee. Moreover, it is cheaper of the two.

#### **KHEER AND KHOA.**

*Kheer* is 'condensed milk' and may be sweetened or unsweetened. *Khoa* is solid milk or 'dried milk' and is unsweetened.

When pure and fresh cow's milk is boiled down until it is of the consistency of a viscous liquid the result is plain *kheer*. When, previous to boiling the milk, a quarter of its measure of sugar is dissolved in it the product is sweet *kheer*. It is deliciously enjoyed with plantain:

If the plain *kheer* is further boiled down completely, i.e., until all the watery portion has been evaporated and only a solid mass (about

one-sixth) is left, the residue is known as *khoa*. It is an important ingredient in many of the sweets which it enriches imparting a creamy taste.

More than common attention is necessary in the preparation of *kheer* and *khoa*. In boiling the milk so long as it remains liquid it should be agitated with ladle by raising and pouring, otherwise it has every chance of boiling over. When, however, the milk becomes viscous it should be constantly stirred with the spatula (*khunti*). The best way is to scrape all the sides of the pan, and especially the bottom, with the blade of the paddle. Otherwise the stuff has every chance of being scorched. Still more difficulty is met with in the final stages when the milk begins to dry up and extraordinary attention is necessary. The operation is complete when the residue is of the consistency of butter. Then remove from the fire, gather in a lump and allow to cool. On cooling the *khoa* will become solid like dough.

*Khoa* keeps well for 3 to 4 days and even longer. Before use it is generally pulverised and sifted. Sometimes it is baked on a dry pan or soaked in hot water. It may be partaken of in the raw state with or without the addition of sugar and is extremely nutritious.

**CHHANA.**

*Chhana* furnishes the basis of nearly all the important sweets of Bengal. Such being the case we shall deal with its preparation and treatment somewhat elaborately.

To our knowledge there is no exact equivalent of *chhana* in European dietary: the nearest approach being, we understand, home-made cheese with the subsidiary process of ripening omitted. We have, therefore, decided to refer to the product by its vernacular name throughout the book. (The Bengali word "Chhana" is not to be confounded with the Hindi word "Chana" which means gram).

*Preparation.*

## (A). FAMILY METHOD.

*Chhana* of the finest quality is made from pure and fresh cow's milk. The easiest family method is as follows:—

Take 2 lbs. of milk in a deep pan and boil it. Select a good ripe citrus lime of the *pati* variety and squeeze its juice in a cup and keep it handy. When the milk has been boiling vigorously for a couple of minutes scatter the sour lime juice on the bubbling surface as speedily as possible and stir briskly. The whole of the milk will at once curdle and *chhana* will separate in solid lumps. The ex-

act measure of lime juice required to curdle a given quantity of milk depends upon the quality of the milk and should be determined by experience. But it must not much exceed requirements as it will then sour the product. The best procedure is to provide for a little extra quantity of lime juice and to stop it pouring as soon as *chhana* separates which occurs instantaneously.

When sour limes are not available, as may easily happen, the next best method of making *chhana* is as follows: Take a few crystals of citric acid, dissolve them in a tea-cup and pour the solution on the boiling milk. The subsequent procedure is exactly the same as above, the sour lime juice being only substituted by the citric acid solution.

Indeed this method possesses several advantages in that citric acid is always available at the chemist and druggist's store at a trifling cost and can be stored up in a glass phial. About 8 grs. of citric acid will suffice for 1 lb. of pure milk; and about 3 oz. of *chhana* will be yielded by 1 lb. of milk. Moreover, citric acid being the direct chemical product of citrus lime is absolutely harmless. The practice of curdling milk with alum, acetic acid or similar other reagents should be reprehended. They are open to objection on hygienic grounds and are, therefore, not safe to use.

The curdling reagent may also be added to the boiling milk, after removing it from fire when it bubbles up but before the foam dies.

The properties of the *chhana* will, however, differ according as it is obtained by curdling the milk on the fire, or on the ground. In the latter case the *chhana* will be soft and creamy but at the same time soggy. In the former case the *chhana* will be firm and compact; and so it need not be pressed subsequently.

Now strain the curdled milk through a piece of clean cloth or napkin. The whey will filter through and may be collected. The *chhana* remains inside. It is drawn together and hung up to drain for a couple of hours. By that time it loses whatever portion of the liquid it might hold through dripping and becomes a compact mass with uniform texture.

The whey may be preserved for a day or two and used in curdling milk on the next occasion in lieu of lime juice, etc. Indeed good results are yielded thereby.

But even if the whey be not required for this purpose it need not be wasted. This whey contains very small percentage of fat and sugar of milk and may be drunk with benefit. Specially it is administered to infants and invalids, of course in the fresh state, when only liquid food is prescribed. A very minute per-

centage of ghee of exceptional purity and flavour is also obtained from the cream that forms on its surface on long standing.

A note of warning in connection with the preparation of *chhana* may not be out of place here. If the milk be old, it will get spoilt. Also if the quantity of coagulating reagent be deficient than the prescribed dose, the milk will be split and will refuse to curdle further. Should this happen, the best course will be to desist from proceeding further. Add some sugar to taste and use it up as *posset*.

Unlike *khoa*, *chhana* does not keep even for 24 hours. It is best made a couple of hours before the preparation of sweets from it. It may be partaken of in the raw state with or without the addition of sugar.

#### (B). COMMERCIAL METHOD.

On a commercial scale *chhana* is made as follows:—

Scald the milk in a shallow iron pan on fire. Remove when it heaves for the first time. Agitate to equalise the temperature of the whole mass. Take a little whey (from previous operations) in the ladle and pour on it a cup of milk. The milk will curdle. Now tie a piece of cloth at the mouth of a vessel. Pour the curdled milk from the ladle into the cloth. Repeat the operation until the whole milk is

thus exhausted. If the milk curdles too quickly there is an excess of whey and vice versa.

According to another method, the milk is boiled and poured in a vessel. The old whey is thrown into the milk with a ladle. The curdled milk is stirred briskly. In this way the percentage of *chhana* obtained is larger than usual, is more soggy and therefore remunerative.

The food value of *chhana* is immense. By chemical composition it consists of a great percentage of protein and serves as a substitute for meat. Vegetarians should therefore regularly include *chhana* in their diet. Moreover, being primarily a casein product *chhana* is a great tissue builder. Its regular use helps to repair worn out nerves and is therefore beneficial for nervous breakdown.

#### **TREATMENT OF CHHANA.**

In this connection we would like to draw the attention of the reader to a very significant point of procedure. As we have said before, *chhana* enters into the composition of almost all the Bengali sweets. And invariably, before it is so employed, the soggy stuff is packed in a new napkin and subjected to great pressure so as to squeeze out the water. For this purpose the packed *chhana* is inserted between two wooden platters and heavy weights are placed on the upper one. There is a hole in

the lower one through which the milky water flows out.

If properly compressed, the weight of the *chhana* should be reduced nearly by half and the resulting mass should show a solid texture. Only this compact pressed *chhana* is to be used and the whey runs away. This procedure is most important, nay, imperative and essential. In prescribing ingredients in the subsequent recipes the weight of compact *chhana* only, as pressed above, has been given unless otherwise stated. So when buying *chhana* from the bazar double the amount mentioned in any particular instance should be provided for.

It may also be noted here that generally two kinds of *chhana* are available in the market. One is rather stiff containing very little water and suitable for cutting into tablets—to be fried or cooked. This stands the knife well without crumbling. The other is rather soggy but is more creamy and tasteful and is indispensable for preparing the best kinds of confectionery.

With regard to the home-made *chhana*, however, an exception is often made. It is obtained almost always in a firm and compact state simply by hanging up to drip, and as such serves its purpose well without pressing. In those instances where sweets are made of compact *chhana* this will be preferred as it is. But

in preparing *Sandesh* the *chhana* is mashed and may be dried a little by gently baking the stuff in a clean iron pan.

After being pressed or squeezed the compact *chhana* is now treated for the preparation of sweets in the following manner. A lump of *chhana* is taken on a wooden platter and mashed fine. A bit of it is broken aside and rubbed on the platter in the manner of braying or maceration. In this way the whole lump is gradually beaten to a light mass. To test it put a drop on a cupful of water : if it floats it is all right; if it sinks it is to be macerated further. It is to be remembered that *chhana* is ordinarily heavier than water but when it is disintegrated by beating it becomes lighter. The more efficiently the *chhana* is thus beaten or rubbed the more light, white and porous the products will be.

Needless to point out that sweets should be prepared from freshly made *chhana*, for even one-day old *chhana* will taste sour.

#### **DAHL.**

*Dahi* may be identified with sour milk, set milk or 'curd.' It is fermented milk and akin to Koumiss, Kephir, etc. In this country two kinds of *Dahi* are recognised, the sour and the sweet. The former is the most common, while the latter is the most agreeable. The underlying principle of its formation may be

briefly explained. Boiled and tepid milk is inoculated with lactic acid bacteria prior to souring or 'ripening'. These cultures are somewhat akin to yeast, and are termed 'starters.' They are now-a-days available at the 'chemists and druggists' in either liquid or in powder form. A good starter grows rapidly after inoculation into milk, and subsequent incubation. The acidity then increases rapidly. The bacteria helps in the formation of lactic acid, which acts as a preservative, preventing further decomposition.

To serve the purpose of 'starter' the professional confectioner will readily furnish a few drops of *Dahi* whenever asked for.

### *Preparation.*

The simple family method of making *dahi* is described below. Take a pound of milk and scald it. It may be boiled somewhat thick if so desired. Put it into a suitable bowl, preferably of earthenware or stoneware. For this purpose commonly a set of earthenware vessels (*handis*) are set apart by the confectioners. When empty these vessels are washed, warmed at the fire-side and used over and over again. They yield better results thereby, accelerating the ripening process, most probably on account of the trace of *dahi* that is left dried up and adhering all over.

When the milk has cooled down but is still tepid add some 'starter' such as tamarind solution, whey or a pinch of *dahi* itself. Of course *dahi* furnishes the best 'mother-starter.' Only a very tiny dose will suffice which is determined by the rule-of-thumb. This varies according to the quality of milk, its temperature and density, atmospheric and climatic conditions and must be determined by experience only. Before inoculation the 'starter' is whipped on the palm of the left hand with the finger of the right to disintegrate it thoroughly and then added to the milk by sprinkling. The propagation of the culture is facilitated thereby.

The 'starter' is generally added in the evening and the milk left overnight undisturbed in a slightly warm place. If required, it may be artificially incubated by being packed in straw and husks, or by being wrapped up in blanket. These precautions are generally needed in the winter season.

The best temperature for setting is between 92° and 95°F., though the range is 75° to 100°F. The milk will set and form *dahi* in about six hours under favourable conditions. Care should be taken not to disturb the milk in the least after the 'starter' has been added.

The quality of the *dahi* depends upon the quality of the starter and the manner of its inoculation. As a rule, buffalo milk forms more solid *dahi* than cow's milk. Strange to

say, this solid mass, when perfect, may be cut in the manner of pudding with a table knife. Firm *dahi* of medium acidity is the best. When faulty, it may be wheyed off: it may be slightly acid or excessively sour. In no case, however, it need be rejected. *Dahi* is a beneficent foodstuff. It may be partaken of with either salt or sugar according to taste. It promotes longevity.

Sour milk has long been looked upon as a healing agent, and is now-a-days often prescribed by medical practitioners. It is suggested that when *dahi* is taken as food, the lactic acid bacteria contained in it multiply in the intestines and aid digestion by preventing harmful fermentation. It is said to increase the thermal heat of the body and the vital power. It should, however, be used temperately as its constant and inconsiderate use produces cold. It is a wise hygienic rule to take *dahi* only in day time eschewing it altogether at night.

#### *. Sugared Dahi.*

The process of sugared *dahi* is essentially the same as that of sour *dahi*. In this case the boiling milk is sweetened with the desired amount of sugar, say 3 to 4 oz., for every pound of milk. It is preferably sweetened with *batasa* or sugar fondants (like ratafia cakes) which may be had in the bazar. The

sweetened milk is inoculated as usual and allowed to set.

#### **GHOL AND SHERBET.**

It will be apposite in this connection to refer to the two refreshing drinks which can be obtained from *dahi* directly.

(1) *Ghol* is generally prepared by dissolving two large tablespoonfuls of *dahi* in a tumblerful of water and adding a pinch of salt to it. It is a very soothing drink, specially in case of stomachic irritation.

(2) *Sherbet* is prepared as follows:—

Dissolve a spoonful of sugar in a glass of water, stir in a tablespoonful of *dahi*, add the juice of half a citrus lime, strain through a piece of cloth, add ice and enjoy in the hot weather. It is a very cooling drink.

In either case the *dahi* may be perfectly blended in water by first whisking with an egg-beater.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SUGAR AND SYRUP.

**S**UGAR, it must be admitted, is a basic ingredient of confectionery. And as such it will be helpful to become acquainted with its properties and different forms. Sugar is scarcely incorporated by itself; it is made into syrup with water of the desired consistency. Whenever sugar is mentioned in the recipe but not worked with as an ingredient, it is to be made into syrup. Particularly for soppy sweets (sops) a 'stock syrup' has got to be prepared beforehand and reserved—in which to dip them.

Sugar may be employed in the form of (1) crystals, (2) powder and (3) syrup. Ordinarily sugar crystals are white and either large (*ekbara*) or small (*dobara*). Granulated sugar is sometimes employed for which purpose 'castor sugar' may be used. When powdered sugar is required the crystals may be pulverised or better still, 'icing sugar' may be substituted. The boiling of syrup is detailed below. Brown sugar, both crystal and powder, is available and is cheaper. The whiter the sugar, however, the lovelier the sweets in appearance.

**BOILING OF SYRUP.**

A thorough knowledge of syrup boiling is essential to the successful preparation of soppy sweets. According to different densities syrup has been classified into four different stages. The lines of demarcation cannot, however, be easily recognised except by expert confectioners. For ordinary purposes it will suffice to be familiarised with only two densities of syrup —thin and thick like the gummy exudations of the Bengal Quince fruit (*Bael*—*Aegle Marmelos*) in its green and ripe stages respectively. The other densities have been noted whereever practicable.

Take 5 pounds of sugar; dissolve in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pounds water in a deep pan and place it over a strong fire. After boiling for some time scum will rise on the surface. To clarify the syrup, take a large spoonful of raw milk, dilute it with an equal measure of water and sprinkle over the frothy surface. With a skimmer remove the scum as soon as it is formed. The dross need not be treated as a refuse but may be given over to the cow as a feed.

Slow down the fire at this stage. When all the scum has been skimmed away, sparkling bubbles will appear. Take away from the fire and strain through a piece of cloth.

Put the syrup in a separate pan and place it again on slow fire. When it becomes sticky and falls in a continuous stream from a ladle, it

is said to have arrived at the last stage. When it becomes denser and the stream is interrupted it is of the second stage. Again on becoming viscous, the syrup appears whitish and a drop being rubbed will show flakes, the syrup is then of the third stage. The fourth stage is that when the syrup has almost the tendency to dry up.

The following broad rules for the application of the different densities of syrup may be laid down. The first stage is required for boiling sweets; the second for soaking them, the third for smearing them and the fourth for coating them like icing of cakes.

The syrup required for the soaking of soppy sweets has been referred throughout as 'stock syrup.' It is always made ready beforehand, held in reserve and kept warm at the time of immersing the sweets. Otherwise it will not soak into them. The sweets also must be hot at the time of immersion. It is best to lift them out from the frying pan and dip them into the syrup direct. 2 lbs. of sugar will be required for every lb. of *chhana*.

The soppy sweets should be kept immersed in syrup till they are required for service. Otherwise they will become dry and insipid on long exposure.

#### **TRANSFORMED SUGAR.**

Sometimes for special purposes the sugar is made to undergo some special treatment.

Ordinarily sugar is hygroscopic, i.e., absorbs moisture from the atmosphere. Thus any sweet into which sugar preponderates will melt and become muggy when left in the open for long. To safeguard against this drawback the viscous syrup of the last stage is further boiled until the water has completely evaporated, and the mass left dry and solid. Then remove from fire and when cool grind the lump into fine powder. This is referred to as amorphous or 'transformed sugar.'

#### **TREACLE AND JAGGERY.**

Often in the preparation of Bengal sweets sugar is substituted by treacle and jaggery, known in the vernacular as *gur*. The former is derived from the sugarcane while the latter is derived from the date palm, each having its choice varieties. While treacle is occasionally employed for inferior kinds of sweets, the admixture of jaggery is much relished, the type *nalin gur* being invariably preferred alike for its colour, aroma and flavour. But it is seasonal being procurable in winter only.

Jaggery, however, cannot be used solely by itself. It has got to be employed with sugar in a suitable proportion when it will impart its rich fawn colour, characteristic flavour and pleasant aroma to the final products.

Coarse moist brown sugar may be used instead of molasses.

## CHAPTER IX.

### RECIPES.

**B**EFORE proceeding to work with these recipes readers are requested to go through the introductory portion very carefully and thereby make themselves familiar with the ingredients, their treatment, methods of cooking and the like.

### GENERAL HINTS.

Even a cursory glance at the complex nature of the recipes given in this book will make it clear that many of the sweets cannot be prepared alone. In practice the need for assistance will be keenly felt and indeed, for efficient working the help of an assistant will be welcome. Especially in some difficult processes the co-operation of two or more persons will be imperative. This will ensure continuity of work which is greatly desirable in preventing loss of time and energy and in saving unnecessary wastes.

It will be apparent that some sweetmeats cannot be rapidly made on a short notice. That will entail great labour and hardship. In those cases it will be judicious to make some

preliminary preparations previously. As for example, when *khoa* is not available in the local market it may be prepared the day before. Pulses, etc., may be steeped in water overnight. Even *chhana* has to be made at least a couple of hours in advance. In short, those ingredients which keep well may be conveniently made ready beforehand to be in time for the sweets proper.

It is obvious that proportions in any recipe cannot be prescribed correct to the minute dose. They are intended to convey only a fair idea and can be approximately varied within reasonable limits in different cases and depending on individual taste. In certain cases the proportion of unessential ingredients may be lowered and unimportant items totally discarded according to one's discretion. Often the proportions of certain items have been omitted altogether, such as for ghee and syrup, the quantity of which may be easily ascertained. It will also be advantageous to compare recipes of a similar nature when hints contained in one may be applied with profit in another.

Often dainty novelties might be effected by judiciously incorporating new ingredients; e.g., jams and jellies may be used as stuffing for *Singara*; artificial essences of plantain and pineapples may be employed to perfume the filling of *Rajbhog* and so on. Many such sugges-

tions on which to act may be yielded by exercising a little originality.

Throughout the different stages in any process, the pastries should be handled very lightly such as in rolling, forming, turning, etc., so that they may not be deformed or impaired.

## CHAPTER X.

### RECIPES—Loochi, Etc.

#### LOOCHI.

Flour	1	lb.
Ghee	1	lb.

*Loochis*, or as they are known *Poorees* in Hindi, constitute the staple article of diet for supper in wealthier families all over India and especially in Bengal. They figure invariably along with *Sandesh* in menus prescribed for the entertainment of guests in all festivals. They are prepared as follows:—

Take the flour on a wooden platter and rub in  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. ghee for shortening. Unless this is done the *loochee* will be stringy. Add 4 to 5 oz. water and knead into dough. Divide the mass into some 3 dozen pellets and mould with the hands into round balls. Form them by gently pressing each between the palms greased with oil or ghee. Take one, dredge it with a little flour and roll it out into a thin circle, about 4 ins. across. The pellets should be rolled out one by one as the frying proceeds.

Meanwhile melt the ghee in an iron pan and when it is ready drop in a circular flap. It will try to float on the liquid but it must be

immediately immersed and held down with the skimmer. The side just in contact with the hot surface of the molten ghee will then swell up (like a blister) with a friable covering. It should now be turned over with the help of the skimmer. Gently press the edges all round to make them come in contact with the ghee. Remove when the underside has been fried, taking care not to reverse the piece again within the pan. It should be placed in the colander to allow the excess ghee to drip off and should remain there until the next one is ready.

Proceed in a similar manner with the other pellets one by one. When the fire is too strong remove the pan and fry on the ground.

*Loochis* are generally partaken of along with soups and curries. They are, however, most relished direct from the frying pan to the plate with table salt as the only sauce. And thus administered, of course in very moderate quantity and under medical advice, they form items of dietetics for patients suffering from loose bowels, diarrhoea and dysentry in the convalescent stage.

*Loochis* are also preferred with ginger chips and fried potatoes. The crisp film cover of the *Loochis* is known as cream.

#### PAROTA.

Flour	1	lb.
Ghee	4	oz.

*Parotas* come next in importance after *Loochis* as they consume less ghee and are more common.

Knead the flour into a dough after rubbing in a little ghee as shortening. Divide the dough into some 20 pellets and as above roll out each into a circle.

The next operation is to fold it up twice to form a quadrant and again roll it out taking care to press uniformly the three sides so that a triangular flap will be the result.

Meanwhile melt a teaspoonful of ghee in a rather shallow pan (*taoa*) ; spread the ghee all over the surface; *paste* both sides of the piece of triangle with the molten ghee and proceed with *sauteing* until it is cooked properly. When the side in contact with the pan assumes a fawn colour turn over.

If the allotted quantity of ghee appears to be insufficient for the purpose, *baste* the piece with a little more ghee. It will be better to have a quantity of ghee previously melted ready at hand. Proceed with the other pellets in a similar manner one by one. Two or three flaps at a time may be managed if basting and sauteing are done properly.

· *Parotas* form a substantial repast with well-seasoned curries or preferably, cooked cereals (of gram).

**ALOOR DUM.****(Potato Stew).**

Potato	1	lb.
Ghee	4	oz.
Dahi	2	oz.
Condiments Paste	1	oz.
Hot Spices Powder	2	dr.

The paste is obtained by braying the following condiments in suitable proportions with water, viz., turmeric, chillies, coriander seed, black pepper, ginger, etc.

The powder is obtained by pounding the following spices, viz., cinnamon, cloves, cardamom minor, etc.

Boil large (Nainital) potatoes in plenty of water; drain in colander when tender. Peel them while tepid and smear them over with *dahi* and the condiment paste.

Melt the ghee in an iron pan and throw in 2 or 3 cassia leaves, a few aniseed and cumin seed. When these spices are singed put in the potatoes adding a little water just sufficient for stewing.

Add a pinch of sugar and requisite salt. Allow to simmer for a few minutes and remove when nearly dry. Dredge with the 'hot spice' powder and cover up until service.

**DAL POOREE.**

Flour	2	lb.
Gram (Chana dal)	1	lb.
Ghee	1	lb.
Mustard oil	2	oz.

Spices:—Black pepper, cayenne, aniseed, cumin seed, ginger and asafoetida.

Steep *Chhana* (gram) in water for 6 or 7 hours. If the pulses are in husk rasp them in several changes of water to remove it. Grate to a pulpy mass with as little water as possible. Singe the pulp in mustard oil adding spices for seasoning, requisite salt and few drops of asafoetida solution in water. Take away when it forms a stiff paste. Divide the paste into 4 or 5 dozen pellets of the size of marbles. These are to be used for stuffing.

Meanwhile knead the flour as in the case of *Loochis*. Divide the dough into some five dozen pieces of the size of eggs. Take one and shape it into a cup by uniformly pressing at the centre and all round with the thumbs. Put in one of the pellets of foundation paste (stuffing) prepared above and close up. The shaping of the cup and the stuffing of the cereals require careful manipulation. The size of the pellet is to be so adjusted that it does not bulge out subsequently. Roll out this stuffed ball into circle about 5 inches across and as thin as it

will bear without giving way. Have the rolling pin and the pastry board previously oiled for the purpose.

Then resort to sauteing as in the case of *Parotas*. Baste well with ghee and cook thoroughly, paying special attention to the edges which, oftener than not escape uncooked.

• When the *Dal poorees* are required urgently and there is no time to steep the gram in water, it may be softened by boiling in water for about half an hour and then mashed to pulp.

These are best enjoyed hot with *'Aloor Dum*.

## CHAPTER XI.

### RECIPES—Salt Articles.

#### RADHABALLAVI.

Flour	1 lb.
Kalai Pulse	2 lb.
Ghee, Gram meal, Soda Bicarb.	
Spices:—Chilli, Black Caraway, Cumin Seed, Ginger, Asafoetida.	

Steep the *kalai* pulse in water for 6 to 8 hours and remove the husks by rasping in several changes of water. Bray the blanched cereals into a soft pulp. Season it with the spices and salt. (Use powdered chilli, ginger juice and asafoetida solution). Make the paste somewhat stiff by incorporating with it gram meal and shorten by the addition of soda bicarb. Finally knead it with a little ghee. Prepare this stuffing in time and divide it into suitable pellets when required.

Now measure the flour and shorten it as usual and knead to a dough. For the preparation of salt stuffed articles like *Kachuri* and this one the dough is further treated by the following method:

Take a little ghee and beat it with salt, sprinkling water. Smear the dough with this

paste and knead it again till smooth and lithe. The flour thereby becomes elastic and afterwards flaky.

Divide the dough into rounds; stuff each with one of the above pellets. Roll out to a large circle about 6 inches in diameter.

Melt the ghee in a pan and remove it to the ground. Throw in the circles one by one. Place the pan on the fire when they will sink. In this way they will be puffed. Serve hot with curries.

#### KACHURI.

There are two typical varieties of these 'cereal cakes' or bannocks. There is the bigger one like the *Loochi*, 3 ins. across and thin and the smaller one, 1 in. across and thick. While the former is known simply as *Kachuri*, the latter is known as *Khasta Kachuri* (*Khasta* means flaky).

The mode of preparation of *Kachuri* is comparable with that of *Dal Poorce*.

#### 1. *Kachuri—Kalai Pulse.*

Flour	1	lb.
Kalai pulse	8	oz.
Ghee		q.s.
Spices in powder.		
Asafoetida and ginger.		

Steep the pulses in water for 6 or 8 hours. preferably overnight. When thoroughly soak-

ed remove the husks by rasping in several changes of water. Grate down the pulses somewhat roughly with minimum of water to a tough paste. Mix the following spices for seasoning; pounded ginger, dissolved asafoetida, etc., and requisite salt. Singe the mass in 1 oz. mustard oil, if desired, to make it tasty. This step is however often omitted as the *kalai* pulse, being of a sticky nature, is sufficiently workable by itself. Divide the pulp into pellets.

Meanwhile measure the flour, in the shortening, wet and knead. Divide the dough into small balls. Mould them round and shape into cups. Stuff them with the cereal pellets. Close up and roll out into thin circles. Fry them like *Loochis* fully immersed in ghee. Some prefer to fry them in oil which is said to make them more tasteful.

The *Kachuris* are to be taken hot with pickles, jams and jellies.

The cereal mostly used for the preparation of *kochuri* is *mash kalai* or green *kalai*. Any other cereal may however be substituted for this, sometimes with better result. A very good variety is prepared with green peas (when in season) which must be skinned before grating to pulp. Another variety is obtained by using *panch kalai* (or five cereals) comprising different kinds of grams and peas brayed together to a pulp. In these cases, however,

the pulp must be signed in mustard oil to make it suitable for stuffing.

### *2. Kachuri—Green Peas.*

Flour	1	lb.
Peas	2	lb.
Ghee	1	lb.
Spices.		

The peas are skinned and grated to a dry pulp. Work into it condiment paste of aniseed, black pepper and salt. Flavour with pounded ginger and asafoetida solution. Now melt 2 oz. ghee (or scald mustard oil) and singe in it the pulp. Baste it thoroughly to mask the raw odour of peas and until it becomes a stiff mass suitable for stuffing.

Then proceed as in the case of *Kachuri* of *kalai* pulse.

### **KHASTA KACHURI.**

Flour	1	lb.
Gram	4	oz.
Ghee		

Hot spices, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom.

Soften the gram by boiling in water for half an hour. Drain in colander and mash to a pulp. Singe the pulp in mustard oil as in the case of *Dal Pooree* to form a stiff paste suitable for stuffing. Dredge with powdered hot spices. Divide the paste into small pellets.

Rub a little more shortening into the flour than usual to make the product very friable and flaky, which are the marked peculiarities of this variety. Wet the flour and work into a smooth dough. Divide into small balls, shape into cups, stuff with gram pellets and close up. Mould into round balls and form by applying gentle pressure between the palms. Make a dent in the middle with the knuckle.

Fry carefully 5 or 6 at a time in a deep pan and at a uniform heat so that even the inside does not escape uncooked as is wont to happen with such thick stuffs. Lift out the fried pieces with the skimmer and transfer to a colander to allow the superfluous ghee to drip off.

*Khasta Kachuri* is to be served with ginger clips.

#### NIMKI (Salt Biscuit).

Flour	1 lb.
Ghee	1 lb.
Salt	

Caraway, fennel, parsley.

Rub about 5 or 6 oz. ghee in the flour as shortening to make the products flaky and friable. Incorporate salt and spices; wet and work into a smooth dough. Divide the dough into 5 doz. rounds. Roll them out into circles. Fold twice, press and roll out again into

triangles, like *Parotas*. Fry them in a full pan like *Loochis*.

### SINGARA.

#### • (1) *Singara—Potato.*

Flour	1	lb.
Potato	1	lb.
Ghee	1	lb.
Spices		

Boil the potatoes in water; when tender drain in colander, peel and cut to small pieces. Dredge with finely powdered condiments and hot spices according to taste and a pinch of salt. If desired the potato bits may be singed in a little ghee to make them more tasteful. These are for filling.

Measure the flour, rub in usual shortening and knead into dough. Divide the mass into 3 doz. rounds. Take one and roll it out to an oval shape (about 7 ins. long and 3 ins. broad). Have the pastry board and rolling pin greased with oil for the purpose. Cut the oval spread breadthwise into two. Take one half and wet its edges by dipping the forefinger in water and gently passing over them. Make it into a cone by bringing together the two rims of the straight edge and leaving the circular edge as a flap. Fill the pocket thus formed with a few potato bits prepared as above and close down the flap fluting with moisture. Do the same

with the other half of the oval as well as with the other pellets. Fry them carefully in ghee 5 or 6 at a time.

Great difficulty is at first met with in making the edges stick together fastly. Any weak point may give way in frying letting out the filling. But the difficulty can be overcome with a little practice.

The composition of the filling in the above recipe may be easily varied according to individual taste. A few coconut chips or baked poppy seed will garnish it. Even jam and jelly may be worked in a similar manner for novelty.

(2) *Singara—Cauliflower.*

Flour	3	lb.
Ghee	2½	lb.
Potato	2	lb.
Cauliflower	3	
Coconut	1	

Mustard Oil, Spices and Condiments, Ginger, Cayenne, Coriander.

The stuffing has got to be prepared first.

Procure 3 large cauliflowers; reject the stalks and slice the flower heads only. Peel and slice the potatoes. Break the coconut and shred the kernel into five chips.

Scald a little mustard oil on a pan, and singe in it cassia leaves, aniseed, etc. Baste the vegetables in the seasoned oil. Add to this

the condiment paste (coriander, cayenne and ginger brayed together) blended in a little water. Add coconut chips. Allow to simmer until the vegetables are tender. Remove from fire, dredge in powder of hot spices and cover up.

The stuffing thus prepared is extremely palatable. It should be allowed to cool before being worked with; otherwise the products will be spoilt.

Then proceed as in the case of ordinary *Singaras*.

### (3) *Singara-Kashmiri*.

This variety can be made by substituting *Mcwa* and *Khoa* for Potato, Cauliflower and coconut in item (2). To create novelty a quantity of jam, jelly or other fruit preserve may be mixed with the stuffing.

### **DALMUT.**

Gram pulse	1 lb.
Ghee	q.s.

Take fresh gram pulses (husked halves) and soak them in water overnight. Next morning wash them clean in fresh water and drain in colander. The dripping must be as complete as possible.

Now take the ghee in a pan and bring to boil. Throw in the soaked pulses and fry until

hard but brittle. If it be not possible to manage the whole quantity at one time, it may be fried in two or three batches.

If the ghee be not sufficiently hot a heavy froth will appear owing to the pulses being wet. Even as it is a froth will rise and the frying will be complete only after the froth subsides thoroughly.

Dredge with salt, black pepper (powder), ginger pieces and lime juice. The use of chillies or onion for dressing is optional. It is not only toothsome to the extreme but also serves as a mild laxative.

#### JHURIBHAJA.

(*Lit.*—Wickerwork).

Matar meal	1 lb.
Ghee	q.s.

There are two varieties of this stuff which resemble *spaghetti*. The ingredients and preparation of both are the same. They differ only in their size; the one is thick like worm and the other is thin like thread.

Take the pulse meal in a bowl and whisk into a stiff batter with as little water as possible. The paste must be like soft dough. An excess of water will spoil it. For preparing the thick kind a quantity of powdered cayenne pepper may be worked into the paste while salt

and black pepper will do for the thin kind. Give two or three final kneadings and do it up.

Meanwhile procure a skimmer with pores of the required degree of fineness. Make the ghee ready in a pan. Place a pair of light wooden bars across the pan parallel to each other and resting on its brim. Rest the skimmer on the bars so that the pores may be in the middle of the pan. Now take a handful of the foundation batter as prepared above and force the same through the pores. The stuff will come out in threads and when long enough will tear away and fall on the molten ghee. Fry until crisp.

For the above purpose the professional confectioners employ a perforated wooden plank with four handles which easily rest on the pan.

#### **PALTA BHAJA.**

*Palta* leaves, Matar meal, Mustard oil, Salt and spices.

Take the cereal meal in a basin. Work in a pinch of salt and powdered pepper. Add a little water and whisk to a soft but rather firm batter. It must be of such a consistency that it will adhere to the leaves and not trickle down.

Pick the *palta* leaves, wash them clean and cut in halves if desired. Take one by one dip in the batter and fry in oil

Fried in ghee it will not be so tasty.

*Palta* is the name of the creeper of *pulwal* (patal). It is extremely bitter to taste but is a recognised febrifuge. It is much liked in nausea attending sickness.

## CHAPTER XII.

### RECIPES—Mohanbhog & Barhas.

#### MOHANBHOG.

(Lit. A Captivating Dish).

*Mohanbhog* is known in Hindi as *Hulwa* which is, by the by, its more familiar name. There are several varieties of this Indian porridge the modes of preparation of which are similar. The chief ingredient of the most common variety is *suji* or semolina while that of the other varieties are either pulse, starch or even fruit. It is boiled in water or milk, the proportion of which is so adjusted that the product is just pasty but not soggy.

#### SUJI MOHANBHOG.

Suji	1	lb.
Ghee	12	oz.
Sugar	12	oz.

Melt the ghee in a pan over gentle fire. When this is ready throw in the *suji* and stew for about ten minutes, stirring briskly until it is of buff colour in appearance. The grains of the *suji* swell by absorbing the ghee and a very agreeable smell is given off. Pour water sufficient to cook the *suji* for ten minutes to make it soft. Add the sugar while the stuff is boil-

ing and mix thoroughly. Strew over seeds of cardamom major and raisins. Remove when it is pasty and draws away from the pan. An excess of water will make it soggy and insipid.

*Hulwa* is sometimes seasoned by singeing one or two cassia leaves and aniseed in the ghee before frying the *suji* in it.

It is best served in tiffins at breakfast and is said to be a great bone-builder.

#### MUNGER MOHANBHOG.

Mung pulse	2 lb.
Ghee	1½ lb.
Milk	1½ lb.
Khoa	8 oz.
Sugar	1½ lb.

Almonds, Pistachio, Raisins, etc.

Soak the pulses in water for 6 to 8 hours. Remove the husks by rasping in several changes of water. Wash clean and bray to a pulpy mass. Stew the pulp in the ghee over a gentle fire for 10 to 15 minutes until the odour of the cereals is masked completely. Herein lies the secret of success for preparing these porridges. The smell of the raw cereals must be effectively 'killed' or masked so that it cannot be detected in the final product.

Now pour the milk on the stuff, stir, and add the sugar. Mix thoroughly and allow to boil. Water may be substituted for milk but then the product will not be so creamy. How-

ever, to ensure good cooking of the cereal a portion of the milk may be replaced by water. When the stuff begins to thicken incorporate the *khoa*, previously pulverised and sifted. Strew over a handful of raisins and seeds of cardamom major. Take away when it is pasty and draws away from the pan and pour in shallow plates. Garnish with finely chopped almonds and pistachios. A few crimson rose petals will lend the dish additional grace.

In the above recipe *mung* pulse may be easily replaced by gram or *chana* and cowpea or *barbati* with equally good result. A very nice dish is prepared by using green peas or even pistachios instead of the cereals. In every case, however, the pulses are to be soaked in water and skinned.

All these varieties are known in Hindi as *Dal Hulwa*.

#### SATHIR MOHANBHOG.

Sathi	4	oz.
Ghee	2	oz.
Sugar	4	oz.
Milk	2	oz.

Melt the ghee in slow fire. Stew the *sathi* free from lumps. Pour in milk. Let boil, Add sugar. Take away when pasty.

*Sathi* being easily digestible helps the assimilation of ghee without effort. The product

may be therefore prescribed for persons with weak digestion.

#### **PAPAW MOHANBHOG.**

Green Papaw	2
Khoa	4 oz.
Ghee	2 oz.
Milk	4 oz.
Sugar	12 oz.

Procure two medium-sized unripe papaw so as to yield about one pound pulp. Peel the skin, cut into 4 to 6 lengthwise slices and reject the seeds and slimes. Wash clean and boil them in water until tender. Drain in colander and mash into fine pulp.

Stew the pulp in ghee for about 15 minutes so as to mask its vegetable origin. Pour the milk and add sugar. When the stuff begins to thicken incorporate pulverised *khoa*. Agitate thoroughly and take away when pasty. Strew over chopped almond and pistachio, raisins and pounded cardamom seeds.

*Papaw*, the luscious tropical fruit, is generally preferred in the ripe state. But the confection prepared in the above way from the unripe fruit is no less covetable. The milky juice that exudes from the papaw (both fruit and plant) contains a valuable digestive ferment known as Papain or ‘vegetable pepsin’ and is equally efficacious in liver complaints like animal pepsin.

**BARHAS.**

*Barhas* are fritters of cereal meal soaked in syrup or other stock liquids. Whether salt, sour or sweet, the foundation batter is much the same: but it is thick enough to retain its shape when dropped by spoonfuls into the frying pan.

**Dahi Barha.**

Kalai pulse	1	lb.
Mustard oil	8	oz.
Dahi	8	oz.
Salt		q.s.
Spices		q.s.

Soak the split pulses for 6 to 8 hours. Remove the husk completely by rasping in several changes of water. Bray the blanched pulses on the stone slab with the stone muller to a smooth pulp. Whisk this to a thick batter with as little water as possible.

Place the pan with mustard oil on the fire and when the oil is smoking drop the batter into it bit by bit with the tips of the fingers or preferably from a spoon. As many as 16 to 20 fritters can be managed at a time. The fritters will at first sink to the bottom of the pan; then as the paste begins to swell, they will rise to the surface. They should be gently turned and moved about until the fritters are finely coloured. Ladle out with the skimmer. Proceed on until the whole of the batter is

finished. Meanwhile take the *dahi* and dilute it with about a quarter of its measure of water. Add a pinch of salt and cumin seed (baked and powdered). Mix well and have this stock liquid ready beforehand.

As soon as the fritters are fried as above, transfer them direct from the pan to this stock-liquid. Allow to soak for an hour or so; they are ready when soft and sloppy.

#### **MITHA BARHA.**

Kalai pulse	1	lb.
Mustard oil	8	oz.
Dahi	4	oz.
Sugar		q.s.

Proceeding as in the case of *Dahi Barha* the fritters are fried smaller in size and soaked in the following stock-liquid :—

The *Dahi* is diluted with water and sweetened with sugar.

#### **RAS BARHA.**

Kalai pulse	
Mustard oil	
Sugar	

Proceeding as before the fritters are fried still smaller in size, say, like peas. They are then soaked in thin sugar syrup.

They are in the nature of *Bundias*.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### RECIPES—Coconut Conserves.

#### RASKARA.

Coconut	4
Sugar	1 lb.
Cardamom Major	

Select medium-sized fully ripe coconuts. Break them in twos. Scrape out the kernel. Mix sugar in the scrapings. Cook the mass until it becomes a soft paste. Strew a few seeds of cardamom major and mould into balls with the hands.

In the more common varieties of this confection such as, coconut conserve (*narike* *naru*) treacle or jaggery is substituted for sugar, the quantity of which may be varied according to the size of the coconuts. For big sized coconuts a little more sugar will be required and vice versa.

*Raskara* prepared with sugar is generally employed for ‘filling’ or ‘stuffing’ other sweets such as *Peraki* (which see). It is one of the simplest of confections.

*Raskara* prepared with treacle or jaggery is usually taken with *Murhi* and *Murki* (puffed and sugared rice) at breakfast in the villages

of Bengal. Such a repast is at once cheap, light and wholesome.

Be it noted in this place that as an article of diet coconut is nutritious and easily assimilable and as such it is administered even to consumptive patients.

### **CHANDRAPULI.**

(*Lit.* Moon Cake).

Coconut	6
Khoa	8 oz.
Chhana	8 oz.
Sugar	1 lb.
Cardamom seeds	
Camphor	

*Chandrapuli* is an improved variety of *Rashkara*. Select fully ripe medium sized coconuts. Break them in twos just at the middle breadthwise. Let the inclosed water run away. Scrape out the kernel with the scraper. Grate the scrapings into a fine pulp on the stone slab with the stone muller. Take care not to waste the milk. Put the pulp on a piece of clean cloth, draw together the corners and squeeze the coconut milk. Store it aside for subsequent use.

Now pulverise the *khoa* and sift and bray the *chhana*. Mix these two ingredients into the squeezed coconut pulp and add the sugar in powder. Work the stuff intimately and cook

on very slow fire for 15 or 20 minutes stirring constantly with the spatula. Towards the middle of the operation pour the coconut milk reserved above on this mass. Take away when it loosens from the sides of the pan and forms a soft paste. Strew over pounded cardamom seeds and when cool perfume with a few grains of camphor. The paste is finally moulded into semi-circular fancy shapes showing floral designs with wooden moulds. (Illustration).

Instead of adding 1 lb. sugar in full, 12 oz. sugar and 4 oz. date jaggery (*Nalin Gur*) of the finest quality and flavour may be used. In that case slightly brown batch will result with a delicate aroma and pleasant taste. But the jaggery is available only in the winter season.

In the above recipe the milk ingredients *khoa* and *chhana* are added to impart to the sweet a creamy taste. Good results may, however, be obtained by using either of the two alone. For the matter of that *chhana* is often omitted and the proportions of *khoa* is suitably increased. Sometimes again they are added in lesser quantities than indicated.

#### **TILKUTA.**

Coconut	1
Sesamum	8 oz.
Khoa	4 oz.
Sugar	5 lb.

The main ingredient of this confection is sesamum or gingelly (vern. "til"). It is also known as niger seed and *ram-til*. It is black oily seed which requires to be blanched for this purpose. This is effected by skinning the seeds as follows:

Soak the seeds overnight in water; in the morning when they are soft abrade or rasp them against a close knit wicker-work, or for that matter, on any rough-cut surface. The black husks will be excoriated and the white kernels will be exposed.

Such blanched sesamum seeds are also available in the market. Wash them in water and dry in the sun by spreading on a cloth. Then bake the seeds lightly in flat pan (*taoa*) on very slack fire. Pound the brittle seeds into powder—not too fine—in a mortar and pestle. Pounded sesamum seeds are sometimes sold in the market ready made.

Meanwhile scrape the coconut kernel and grate the scraping to a pulp. Mix together sesamum powder, coconut pulp and sugar. Cook to a rather stiff paste. Divide the paste into some 40 pellets; mould into circles with the hand.

Pulverised khoa is added (during cooking) to make the paste creamy.

**ANANDA LAROO.**

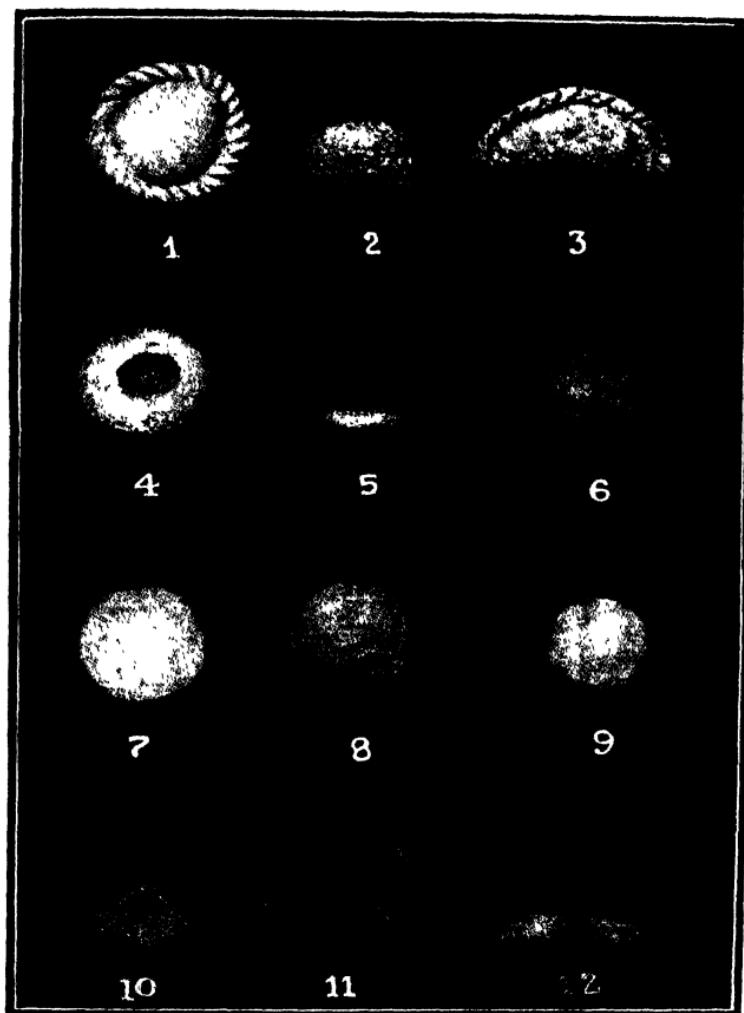
Safeda	1	lb.
Treacle	1	lb.
Coconut scapings	4	oz.
Sesamum	8	oz.
Mustard oil		q.s.

The treacle should be quite thin. Take two coconuts and scrape its kernels. Blanch the sesamum by rasping over a close wicker-work when they will be decorticated.

Mix together all the ingredients and if the batter becomes stiff moisten with the milk of the coconuts. Fry in small fritters.

When cool bind them into round balls.

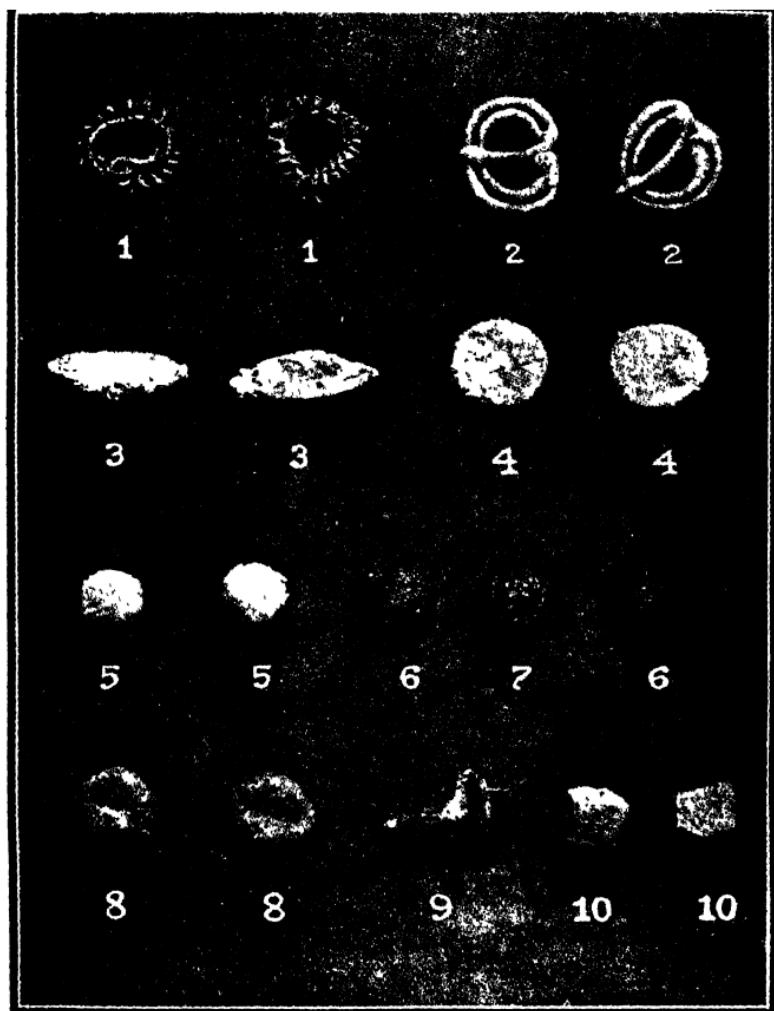
## SOPHS.



1. Kanti, 2. Mecha, 3. Peraki, 4 & 6. Lady Canning,  
(cut halves to show cavity for filling), 5. Pantoah,  
7. Kheermohon, 8. Rajbhog, 9. Rasagolla, 10. Munger  
Barfi, 11. Bonde, 12. Chamcham.

[Ref. p. 113.]

## MITHAIS.



1. Amrita Jilapi, 2. Jilapi, 3. Jibe Gaja, 4. Paira Gaja,
5. Sitabhog, 6. Mihudana, 7. Darlesh, 8. Balusahi,
9. Stuffed Singara, 10. Gaja.

To face p. 83]

## CHAPTER XIV.

### RECIPES—Mithais.

#### CHHANAR MURKI.

Chhana	1 lb.
Sugar	8 oz.

Contrary to general rule the *chhana* in this case may be of the compact variety. Indeed the softer kind will not be suitable for the purpose

First cut the lump of *chhana* into slices  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. Then cut the slices into small cubes ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch), using a table knife for the purpose.

Now melt the sugar in a little water and heat in a pan. Throw the cubes of *chhana* in the boiling syrup and coddle for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove when the syrup has nearly dried and on cooling the cubes will be coated with sugar..

If properly done the outside of the cubes will appear slightly brown and the inside ought to taste sweet. These simple sweets are very dainty.

#### KATKATE.

Flour	2 lb.
Ghee	$1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Treacle	2 lb.

Measure the flour and rub in about 8 oz. ghee as shortening. Knead with sufficient water. For convenience divide the dough into 4 batches. Roll out each into about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch circle. Cut the spread with a knife into small cubes like gaming dice (less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch square). Fry these cubes in ghee until of buff colour and heap upon a plate.

Meanwhile take the treacle in a pan and melt by heat. A little water may be added if the treacle be too solid. Let it simmer for 15 to 20 minutes to make it viscous. The treacle will be ready when it shows a tendency to dry upon the finger, i.e., when it snaps.

Now spread a quantity of the fried cubes and sprinkle over it a ladleful of treacle. Take a handful of these cubes, smear them well with treacle and mould into a ball within the fist. The pressure of the fingers against the palm will suffice for the purpose. To facilitate the moulding of the balls the palms may be greased with ghee (or oil) and as they are to be worked whilst hot the hands may be conveniently floured.

As the cubes will not hold together unless the treacle is hot it must be taken out by ladlefuls as required and when it cools down it may be warmed again. On drying the treacle serves as the binding agent and therefore the treacle must be prepared upto the suitable consistency.

*Katkate* is a jaw-breaker and its hardness is a test for the strength of the teeth. It is very much liked by the children.

**TAKTI.**

Flour	2	lb.
Ghee	2	lb.
Sugar	2	lb
Water	10	oz.

Measure the flour on a wooden platter and rub in 8 oz. ghee as shortening. Mix water and knead into a smooth dough. For convenience in working divide the dough into 4 batches. Roll out one to the thickness of  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch and prick with a fork for proper cooking. Cut the spread into about 2 inch square pieces. Gather the leavings round the contour and work it into the remainder of the dough.

Fry the tablets in ghee about 5 or 6 at a time. Often let them simmer on the ground. The frying is complete when they are of fawn colour. They must be short and flaky.

Meanwhile boil sugar and water until the syrup ropes when dropped from spoon.

Put the fried biscuits one by one in the syrup; smear each on all sides and lay out on a spacious plate to dry, so that it receives a thin coating of sugar on cooling like icing sugar on cakes.

## PERAKI.

Flour	2	lb.
Ghee	1½	lb.
Sugar	5	lb.

*For filling.*

Coconut	4	
Sugar	1	lb.

Cardamom major, Camphor.

*Peraki* is a kind of roll with tapering ends and containing suitable filling usually of *Raskara* (which see).

The stuffing should be prepared first. For this purpose break the coconut into halves, scoop out the kernel with the scraper. Mix with the sugar and cook for 10 or 15 minutes until the mass forms a firm paste not too moist. Take away, and work in seeds of cardamom major and a bit of camphor.

Now measure the flour and rub in the usual shortening. Knead into dough. Divide the dough into about 80 pellets. Roll them out into small circles. Lay on each, in the middle, a tablespoon of filling. Fold over to make semi-circles. The difficulty now lies in so closing (fluting) the edges together that the filling might not come out. This is effected by a sort of plaiting.

Take one, hold it gently on the left hand and start from the right hand end. Press to-

gether the edges between the tips of the thumb and the forefinger so that the particular point flattens out and distends like a lobe. Tuck it up and turn over. Then move the fingers to the next open point to the left, adjacent to the pressed point, and repeat as above. Go on with the plaiting until the left hand corner is reached. • In this way the filling is completely secured and if done properly nothing can escape.

Fry the rolls carefully in the ghee so that the joint may not give way and let out the filling. In that case everything will be spoilt. They can be successfully plaited with a little practice.

When all are fried besmear them with thick syrup so as to give a coating of sugar like *Takti*.

#### KANTI.

Flour	2	lb.
Ghee	1½	lb.
Sugar	2	lb.

#### *For filling.*

Khoa	8	oz.
Almond	1	oz.
Pistachio	1	oz.
Raisins	1	oz.
Cardamom minor	8	

Powder and sift the *khoa*. Work in bruised seeds of cardamom, stalked raisins,

shredded almonds and pistachios. Do it up neatly into a paste. The filling may be sweetened if desired by mixing powdered sugar crystals and scented with rose otto.

Measure the flour, rub in the shortening and knead into thin circles ( $\frac{1}{8}$  inch); and 2 inches across. Take one, spread on it a spoonful of the filling or a little more. Cover it up with another circle laid so that the upper one fits exactly on the lower one like a cap.

Now it is required to secure the two circles together, holding the filling inside. This is effected with a sort of plaiting like that of *Peraki*. Just start at a suitable point, press the edges together, between the tips of the thumb and the forefinger so as to distend a little like a lobe. Tuck it up and fold back. Go round the entire rim one way, say left handed, until you return to the starting point. Do with the others similarly.

Fry them in ghee and give a coating of sugar.

#### MECHA.

Flour	2	lb.
Ghee	1	lb.
Sugar	1	lb.
Raskara	8	oz.
Aniseed		
Black pepper		
Sesamum		

Measure the flour and rub in the shortening, a little less than usual will suffice. Knead into dough and divide it into 6 or 8 batches. Roll out to  $1/16$  inch thickness and cut out any small shape haphazardly. Fry these tiny bits in ghee. They will be a little hard. When the whole of the dough is fried, grind the pieces into fine meal.

Now work into this meal pounded aniseed and pepper and baked sesamum. Mix in the *Raskara* (which see) and do it up into a stiff paste. Divide the paste into pieces the size and shape of hen's eggs. Mould them thus by gently pressing with the hands, using a quantity of thin syrup as the only binding agent. These 'paste-forms' must not crumble down on cooling and must be handled carefully.

Finally, when dry and cool, lay them out on a plate. Pour on each a spoonful of thick syrup which will form a thin crust of sugar and coat.

*Mecha* is welcomed by those who like spiced sweets, in the nature of chocolate.

#### MAGADH LAROO.

Suji	1	lb.
Ghee	14	oz.
Sugar	20	oz.
Cardamom major		
Raisins		

Take the ghee on a pan and melt it over a gentle fire. Throw in *suji* and stew it stirring constantly. The grains of *Suji* will swell considerably by absorbing the ghee, and assume a light fawn colour. Then it is properly cooked for the subsequent operation.

Pour out the fried *suji* on a plate and mix in the sugar intimately. Strew over cardamom seeds and handful of raisins and heap up the mass. Nothing now remains to be done save to make out balls from it, but the whole difficulty lies there. The ghee is generally taken in a little excess so that it oozes out from *suji* when poured on the plate. Now when sugar is mixed it dissolves in the surplus ghee gets sticky and serves as the only binding agent on drying.

To work satisfactorily take from the mixture of *suji* and sugar a little at a time; blend the two ingredients well and mould into round balls applying gentle pressure within the fist. The balls will retain their shape without crumbling if they are formed whilst the mass is warm.

#### **GAJA.**

There are two essential types of *Gaja*, viz., salt and sweet, with several modifications of the latter.

#### *Nun Gaja (Salt).*

Flour	1	lb.
Ghee	1	lb.

Salt

Soda Bicarb

Citrus lime

Measure the flour on a wooden platter, rub in 4 oz. ghee for shortening and the sour juice of the lime. Work in salt to taste and a pinch of soda. Knead into smooth dough with sufficient water. For the sake of convenience divide the mass into two batches. Roll out one into a circle  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick on greased pastry board with greased rolling pin. Prick the rolled paste with a fork to ensure proper cooking of the interior. With a bread-knife cut the spread into diamond biscuits or into any other shape. The irregular leavings round the contour may be gathered into a ball and the process repeated.

Fry the biscuits thoroughly in ghee on moderate fire until they are flaky and friable. Done properly they must crumble on the tongue without effort imparting a slight sour and salt taste.

This salt *Gaja* is also known as *Nimki*.  
(c.f. *Nimki*).

*Mitha Gaja (Sweet).*

Flour	1	lb.
Ghee	12	oz.
Sugar	6	oz.
Poppy seed	1	oz.

Measure the flour on the platter; rub in the usual shortening and work in the finely

powdered sugar. Strew over poppy seeds and knead well with sufficient water. Divide the dough into about 2 dozen pellets. Mould each lengthwise between the palms and make a dent in the centre with the knuckle. Fry 8 or 10 at a time until short.

They will, of course, taste sweet.

**GAJA.—(Another method).**

Flour	2	lb.
Ghee	2	lb.
Sesamum	2	oz.
Black cumin seed	$\frac{1}{2}$	oz.
Soda Bicarb	1	dr.
Sugar	$1\frac{1}{2}$	lb.

Pick the sesamum and cumin seed, strew them over the flour. Rub in about 10 oz. ghee as shortening, breaking the clots that form. Then blend the soda in a little water and work it into the mass. Now add requisite water (8 to 10 oz.) and knead well. The less the water used in kneading the more flaky will be the product. Roll out the dough 1 inch thick. Cut it into 1 inch cubes with the table knife. Fry the cubes in ghee until flaky and friable. Often let them simmer away from the fire on the ground.

Meanwhile prepare a rather thick syrup by boiling the sugar in water; dip into it the cubes one by one and store away on a plate.

**JIBE GAJA.**

Flour	1	lb.
Ghee	8	oz.
Sesamum	$\frac{1}{2}$	oz.
Soda Bicarb	1	dr.
Sugar	8	oz.

Measure the flour and strew over sesamum. Rub in the shortening, a little less than usual, as the product need not be so friable. Work in the soda and knead well. Divide the dough into several pellets. Mould into rounds with the hands. Roll out each lengthwise like the tongue (whence the name) and as thin. Fry in ghee and smear in thick syrup.

**PAIRA GAJA.**

Flour	1	lb.
Ghee	1	lb.
Sugar	8	oz.

Cumin seed (Black).

Rub in 4 oz. ghee in the flour as shortening. Knead into a dough. Divide the dough into several pellets. Mould them round with the hands. Roll them out into thin circles about 2 inches across. Prick with a fork. Fry in ghee. Smear in syrup.

The above two varieties differ only in shape and size.

**MINOR VARIETIES OF GAJA.**

Other minor varieties of *Gaja* may be prepared as follows:—

Roll out a quantity of dough either thin or thick; cut the thick spread into tiny cubes and the thin one into any oblong shape at random. Fry them crisp and smear with sugar syrup or treacle.

Then there is the *Gaja* like the planings of carpenters.

#### **CHANAR GAJA.**

Chhana.

Sugar.

The *chhana* for this purpose should be very hard. Spread it in a pie dish ( $\frac{1}{2}$  in. high rim) and press it with an even plate. The mass will become compact. Cut into square tablets (1 inch) with a sharp knife. The sides of these carved pieces should be gently tapped on the platter. This is to bind the grains together so that they might not crumble away during boiling. Coddle the tablets in thick syrup and remove nearly dry.

#### **BALUSAHI.**

Flour	1 lb.
Ghee	1 lb.
Syrup	q.s.

Shorten the flour with 4 oz. ghee. Rub fine to free from clots. Wet gradually and knead into a smooth little dough. About 6 oz. water will be required. Divide the dough into

about 2 doz. balls. Take one and roll it between the palms in the same direction. After a time marks of flakes will appear like those of a peeled orange exposing the cores with two apexes. For speedy work simple rolling of the balls over a greased dish might suffice.

Now melt the ghee in a deep pan and when smoking remove from fire. Take the balls one by one, make a dent in each with the knuckle and drop in the molten ghee. These should be fried very slowly and carefully. When the ghee ceases to simmer on the ground, put the pan again on fire but remove it as soon as the ghee begins to boil. Repeat in this way until they are properly cooked. The marks referred to before ought to come out prominently in nice folds.

Just removing the pan from the fire and before settling it on the ground give the pan a gentle rocking so that the sweets may have a good shaking without being stirred.

When the frying is complete lift them out with the skimmer and arrange on a tray. Smear them all over with thick syrup.

#### **XHAJA.**

Flour	2	lb.
Safeda	8	oz.
Ghee	2½	lb.
Sugar		q.s.
Mustard oil	1	oz.

Take best roller flour (*khasa*) and knead into a dough with water (without shortening). Rub in the *safeda* an equal measure of ghee for shortening, breaking the clots that form. Sprinkle water and beat the mixture on a platter until milk white. Gather it into a cup and reserve.

Now roll out the dough (or half of it) on the *Pata* (long pastry board) very thin and elongated, taking care that no portion tears away. Then spread over it the batter of *safeda* and ghee prepared above. It must be laid on uniformly covering the whole area. Next roll off the layer from one end to the other. It will look like a scroll of paper.

Now oil the hands and taking hold of the scroll gently pull outwards so as to lengthen it. It may be drawn out to double its length but take care that it does not break. Cut this elongated scroll into several pieces (8 or 10); the number depending on the size of the product. There is, however, a trick in carrying which must be carefully learnt.

Start from the left end. Close it up by pinching together the eaves of the scroll. Make an incision about one inch off. Remove the piece, smooth the cut surface with oil and place it on a tray,—closed end down and cut end up. For the second time close up the left end (cut and exposed) of the remainder of the scroll by pinching together, the eaves and make

an incision one inch off. Remove the second piece, oil the cut surface and store away as before. Proceed in this way closing the left ends and smoothing the right ends of the cut pieces. The order will be reversed in the last piece. Its right end (the right end of the whole scroll) will have to be closed and the left end oiled. Store away all the pieces closed and down and oiled ends up. The importance of this point will be apparent from what is described below.

Take a cut piece on the greased pastry board, closed end down and oiled end up. Gently roll it out with the rolling pin pressing on the smoothed end. The circle will be not more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches. Put it gently on molten ghee on a pan—closed side down and oiled side up. This is very important, otherwise everything will be spoilt. It will at first sink to the bottom but subsequently float on the surface. As it comes up gently strike it with the skimmer. The flakes will open out beautifully in concentric rings. Fry carefully until crisp but never tilt it, nor turn over.

Repeat with the other pieces which must be fried one by one. All cannot be managed at once.

If desired the fried pieces may be placed upside down on a colander, out in the sun, when any excess of ghee that may be confined in the flakes will ooze out and may be recovered.

When all the pieces are fried they are submerged in thin syrup for a time, subsequently lifted out and drained.

*Khaja* is perhaps the most difficult of all the sweets to prepare and as such requires great skill and dexterity. Because of the intricacies and pains involved, it is not ordinarily prepared even by the confectioners, far less at home.

The finest *Khaja*, delicate like cobweb, is made at Maldah in North Bengal.

#### GHEOR.

Flour	1	lb.
Ghee	12	oz.
Sugar	12	oz.
Water	1	lb.

Shorten the flour with 2 oz. ghee. Wet with water and whisk for half an hour. The batter should be thinner than that of *Jilapi*, (which see) and should flow limpid from the mouth of a small pitcher.

Now procure an X-shaped tom tom of wicker-work. Melt the ghee in the frying pan and dip the tom tom into it. The surface of the ghee should come up to the brim of the tom tom.

Then take a small pitcher with narrow neck and fill it with a quantity of the founda-

tion batter. Clean its sides from the trickling liquid and hold it about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ft. above the pan. Now carefully pour the batter in a fine stream inside the tom tom. The finer the stream the better will be the product. Stop when the upper half of the tom tom is filled.

Now bring out the stuff by turning over the tom tom, of course inside the pan and replace it. Proceed again to fill the emptied tom tom by repeating the above operation. Make about half a dozen *Gheors* at a time and fry them until crisp. Finally immerse them one by one in syrup.

#### **MUNGER LAROO.**

Mung meal	2	lb.
Ghee	8	oz.
Sugar	1	lb.

Cook the meal in ghee thoroughly until the odour of the pulse is completely masked. Prepare medium syrup by boiling sugar in water. Sprinkle the syrup on the fried meal; work a quantity of both at a time. Mix well and mould into round balls between the palms while still hot.

A rather coarse meal of the *Mung* pulse is sold in the market which may be worked with conveniently for this sweet. But when this is not available whole husked grains could be fried in ghee and ground to coarse meal.

There will be an improvement on the taste of the *Laroos* prepared in the latter way.

#### MUNGER BARFI.

Mung meal	2 lb.
Ghee	8 oz.
Sugar	1½ lb.

Proceed as above. Make the syrup rather thicker. Mix together meal and syrup thoroughly. Pour the batch on a pie dish. Allow to set. It will solidify on cooling. Cut into diamond shapes.

*Mung* is said to strengthen the eyes.

#### SON PAPRI.

Besan (Mung)	1½ lb.
Flour	1½ lb.
Ghee	2½ lb.
Sugar	5 lb.

Mix together *Besan* and flour and incorporate ghee. Then cook the whole mass in gentle heat, simmering for about half an hour. Take down when the mass becomes compact.

Simultaneously prepare sugar syrup of the third degree. Now throw the foundation paste (made above) little by little into the syrup and stir thoroughly. The whole mass is then subjected to "batching" for about half an hour or so. What is known as batching process in confectionery is briefly described here.

A peg is inserted in the wall just outside one's reach. The mass is hung up and drawn by the ends, one in each hand. When elongated the mass is folded up on the peg and drawn again. The operation is repeated several times. This is called batching. By this process the whole mass becomes finely spun and crisp. On a small scale batching may be effected by pulling the mass by two persons over and over again. No doubt this is a tedious task but on successful batching depends the crispness of the final product.

When ready place the paste on a wooden platter previously buttered, compress it as far as practicable and spread out about one inch thick. Carve into pieces about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ins. square. Strew almonds, pistachio, etc.

*Son Papri* is in the nature of a high class biscuit and is highly prized for its crispness.

#### JILAPI.

(Hindi—*Jilobi*).

Flour	4	oz.
Sugar	12	oz.
Ghee	12	oz.
Safeda	1 to	$1\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
Water	4 to	6 oz.

Procure a new earthenware pot known as *handi*. An enamel or aluminium vessel with narrow mouth and neck may serve the purpose.

Blend the flour in a little hot water neither too clotty nor too thin. It must not drop from the hand. Put the batter in the pot, cover up the mouth, wrap it up with a piece of gunny and store away in a warm place for 12 to 14 hours. By that time the flour will be fermented. The mass will smell sour and swell up.

The quality of the product will depend upon the state of fermentation of the batter. The greater the pores, the better the fermentation. To ascertain whether it is in a proper state, dip the finger tips and draw away. If it ropes without break it has fermented well. Otherwise it has to be set aside for 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours more.

Now take out the fermented batter in an enamel bowl and mix into it the *safeda*. If the batter has fermented strongly, and the greater quantity of *safeda* and if it has fermented weakly add the smaller quantity. In the latter case the products (which are tubular) will be short and hollow. In the former case the defects have to be rectified by the addition of the higher proportion of *safeda*. If the tubes get flattened (and leathery) instead of being round (and crisp) it is to be understood that the batter has not been upto the proper state of fermentation.

Now take 180 grs. each of ghee and *safeda*. Mix the two and beat the mixture

with sprinkling of water. When it looks like white cream mix it into the foundation batter prepared above; whisk thoroughly and the stuff is ready for frying.

A special appliance will be necessary for the subsequent operation. Procure a cup with a perfectly round hole (to admit of a pencil) at the centre of the bottom. The hole may be smaller if desired. The confectioners employ the upper half of a dried coconut shell with one of the eyes pierced through.

Put the flat pan (*tai*) on the fire and melt the ghee; the ghee should come up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch otherwise the products will not be fried properly and the tubes will not be thick.

Hold the above holed cup over the pan about a cubit high and put into it a quantity of the foundation batter. It will fall through the hole in a thick thread which may be so manipulated as to form a maze or labyrinth in the pan on falling. The figure thus laid out usually consists of a pair of rings or bangles one within the other with a crossing diameter. These rings ought to be hollow, crisp and tubular. The girth of the ring will be thinner or thicker according as the cup is held higher or lower. A set of 6 or 8 such figures may be arranged on the pan at a time. They are to be handled only with a stick.

Meanwhile have the stock syrup ready. It should be thin and warm. As soon as the *jilapis* are fried, transfer them to the syrup and hold them immersed for a time.

If the syrup be not warm it will not soak into the *jilapis*; therefore it must be warmed for receiving them. About 50 *Jilapis* will be made with this syrup.

#### **AMRITA JILAPI.**

Flour	4	oz.
Sugar	12	oz.
Ghee	1	lb.
Safeda	1½	oz.
Kalai Pulse	2	oz.

Proceed exactly as above to obtain a suitable batter from flour and *safeda*.

Soak the *kalai* pulse in water for 6 or 8 hours. Skin, wash and grate into a very fine pulp.

Mix the batter and pulp together to obtain the foundation batter for this purpose. It will be rather stiff.

Now procure a square piece of thick cloth like a handkerchief. Make a tiny hole with a knitting needle at the centre and hem in all round like a button hole. Otherwise it will grow bigger with pressure.

Put the flat pan on the fire and scald the ghee. Take a ladleful of the foundation batter on the cloth, collect the four corners and hold

together. Squeeze out by gentle pressure and with the thread of batter that comes through draw figures on the surface of the ghee. The usual figure is a 'bangle', 3 inches in diameter with rings attached outside its rim. The 'bangle' may be made a little thicker or a little thinner in girth by applying the pressure more or less.

Steep them in stock syrup as soon as fried; but lift out when soaked.

#### **CHHANAR JILAPI.**

Make the foundation paste exactly as in the case of *Pantoah* (which see). But instead of forming them egg-shaped, make them look like *Jilapi*. Finish like *Pantoah*.

#### **BONDE.**

(*Hindi—Bundia*).

Matar meal	•	4	oz.
Sugar	..	8	oz.
Safeda		1	oz.
Ghee		q.s.	

Take fresh meal of *matar* pulse and knead it into a dough with a little water. Whisk the dough with sprinkling of water for about a quarter of an hour when a rather stiff batter will be obtained. In all about 4 oz. water will be required. The crispness of the product will be increased by using as little water as possible in whisking.

To test whether the batter is sufficiently whisked or not, take a drop of it with the forefinger and place it on water. If it sinks the batter is to be whisked longer. It ought to float, three-fourths of it.

Then mix into it thoroughly the *safeda*. The batter may be coloured with saffron.

To ascertain whether the batter is of the desired consistency or not, place a quantity on the skimmer (*Jhanjra*) held horizontally. If it does not come out through the pores, thin it down with more water. If it comes through but not too quickly it is ready for frying.

Now melt the ghee in a frying pan and hold the skimmer flat over it, about 8 to 10 inches high. Pour a cupful of the batter on it. It will come through the pores in small fritters and fall on the ghee and be fried. The size of the pores of the skimmer ought to be such that the fritters are a little larger than peas.

The fritters should be perfectly roundish in shape. Several factors determine this. The skimmer should be held still and must not be raised or lowered. Otherwise the fritters will be deformed and of unequal sizes.

If in spite of these precautions the fritters are not perfectly round, there is some defect in the foundation batter. The first few drops that fall on the ghee and get fried should be taken out and examined. If they are elongated

mix into the batter 2 or 3 tolas more of *safeda*. The fritters will then be round.

To test whether the fritters are properly fried or not, take out one or two and press between the fingers. If it flattens it is yet raw, cook more. If it cracks it is ready for immersion in stock syrup. Half cooked fritters cannot easily soak; moreover, they will be soon musty.

The syrup should be prepared beforehand but should be warm while receiving the fritters which should be skimmed out of the pan and transferred direct to the vessel containing the stock. The whole quantity of the foundation batter may be fried in as many batches as can be managed.

When the whole stuff is fried and soaked in syrup, the fritters in the stock-vessel should be stirred. If sugar grains appear on the fritters the vessel should be placed on the fire for 5 minutes.

For use the *Bundias* are to be strained out; dredged with camphor and pepper dust. They are served also with *Dahi* or simply.

An inferior quality of *Bundia*, larger in size, may be prepared with chiefly *Kalai* pulse mixed with a little *matar* meal.

#### MIHIDANA.

(*Lit. Pilules*).

Matar Meal

4 oz.

Kalai pulse	1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
Sugar	8 oz.
Safeda	1 oz.
Ghee	q.s.

Proceed exactly as in the case of *Burdia* to make a batter of *matar* meal. Grate down the soaked and husked *kalai* pulse into fine paste. Make the batter obtained above rather stiff by incorporating the paste. With the addition of the *kalai* pulse the fritters will be tender, crisp and puffed.

In this case a skimmer with the pores will be required. Put a cupful of the foundation batter on it and gently strike the handle on the edge of the pan. Globules of the batter will rain through the pores on the molten ghee and be fried into tiny fritters. Strain and transfer to stock syrup. When the whole quantity of fritters is soaked, strain out on a platter and bind into round balls with hands.

#### **NIKHUTI.**

(*Lit.* Faultless).

Exactly similar to above; only the fritters are still smaller—like mustard seeds.

#### **MATICHUR.**

(*Lit.* Pearl Powder).

Similar to *Mihidana*; but the proportion of *kalai* pulse is greater than that of *matar*;

or the two pulses are in equal proportions. Also a little more *safeda* will be required than usual. The fritters are also a little larger, wherefore it is also known as *motadana*.

### DARBESH.

Gram meal	2	lb.
Safeda	4	oz.
Saffron	100	grs
Ghee		q.s.
Sugar	4	lb.
Khoa	8	oz.
Almonds	8	oz.
Pistachio	8	oz.
Raisins	8	oz.

Proceed as in the case of *Bonde* and prepare a batter of gram meal coloured with saffron.

In this case the pores of the skimmer should be smaller than pills but larger than globules.

Allow the fritters to soak in the stock syrup for a couple of hours. Then strain out on to a platter. Pulverise and sift, the *khoa* and mix into the fritters. Strew finely, chopped almonds, pistachios, raisins and cardamom major seeds. Form into balls with the hands.

For spectacular effect a small portion of the foundation batter may be coloured red and mixed with the whole mass. A few red fritters

will then become prominent in the otherwise yellow balls.

#### **NOTE.**

It will be apparent that *Bonde*, *Mihidana*, *Matichur* and *Darbesh* are similar in preparation, the difference consisting in the raw materials and in the size.

The relative advantages and disadvantages of the basic ingredients are discussed here briefly.

Articles of matar meal consume less ghee than those of gram meal. The former keep for long (2 or 3 days) while the latter are spoilt in a day.

Articles solely of *kalai* smack of raw pulse. It is masked by the addition of *matar* meal.

In any case, however, the meal is first kneaded into a soft dough which is gradually thinned down and whisked with the addition of water little by little. The foundation batter prepared in this way will yield excellent results.

#### **SITABHOG.**

(Said to have originated with Sita, the consort of Rama, of the great Epic Ramayana at least 6,000 years ago).

Chhana	12	oz.
Flour	16	oz.
Ghee	12	oz.
Sugar		q.s.

Bray the *chhana* to a fine paste. Shorten the flour with 1 oz. ghee. Mix the two together thoroughly. In this case the *chhana* need not be pressed as a little water is required to make a soft mixture with flour. Beat the foundation paste until very light. Apply the usual test.

Now hold the skimmer by the left hand close to the porous disc and 6 to 8 ins. above the frying pan. In the right hand take a handful of the foundation batter and press it on the skimmer. It will be forced through the pores like worms which will be thrown on the molten ghee. These fritters will look like vermicelli.

Unlike other things of similar nature, these are required to be fried only lightly, avoiding singeing. If they are fried deep brown they will become hard and syrup will not soak into them. Fry them slightly in ghee and drain in colander or wicker-work basket.

Have ready thin stock syrup from before in a pan and immerse into it the fried fritters. When the whole mass has been thus fried and immersed in stock syrup, put the pan of syrup on fire and allow it to simmer for 15 to 20 mins. For proper cooking it will bubble twice.

When the fritters are soft like cooked rice (and as white) strain them on to a platter. Finally bind them into rounds.

### PALTU.

Chhana	2	lb.
Flour	1	lb.
Ghee		q.s.
Syrup		q.s.

Proceed exactly as above but select a skimmer with finer pores, to that the fritters will be thinner, shorter and lighter.

Do not form the soaked fritters into balls, but keep the mass loose and add rose water to scent.

*Paltu* is thus the scattered form of *Sitabhog*, the difference consisting in size and quality. Often the flour in the above recipes is substituted by *safeda* when products of inferior quality will be obtained.

## CHAPTER XV.

### RECIPES—Pantoah, Etc.

#### PANTOAH.

Chhana	1	lb.
Flour	2	oz.
Ghee	12	oz.
Sugar	2	lb.
Soda Bicarb	4	dr.

Compress the *chhana* and bray it to a pulp. To make the pulp light enough for the purpose the *chhana* may be brayed twice or thrice. The usual test is to place a drop of the pulp on a cup of water when it must float. Otherwise the braying is to be repeated. On a separate plate rub  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. ghee as shortening in the flour. Work in the soda dissolved in a little water. Mix a little syrup of sugar. This will ensure characteristic chocolate colour in the final produce. Strew cardamom seeds.

Now incorporate this flour batch into the pulp of *chhana* and knead into a paste. Do it up neatly. Divide the foundation paste into about 2 doz. pellets and form into ovals with the hands. Fry them in deep ghee until brown. The heat should be moderate at the beginning

and the end but may be strong at the middle of the operation. While on the pan rock them round with the skimmer; this will ensure proper cooking. Lift them out and transfer to the stock syrup.

The stock syrup should be prepared beforehand. But it should be warm when receiving the *Pantoahs*. If it has become cold, it should be warmed for the purpose. Otherwise the syrup will not soak into the sweets. When all the *Pantoahs* have been fried and transferred to the stock syrup, put the pan (of the syrup) on the fire; allow to simmer gently and then remove.

In this way the *Pantoahs* become extremely spongy and soppy.

#### **PANTOAH.**

(Another Recipe).

A more creamy variety though not so spongy may be prepared according to the following recipe:—

Chhana	2	lb.
Khoa	8	oz.
Flour	4	oz.
Soda Bicarb	$\frac{1}{2}$	dr.
Ghee	q.s.	
Syrup	q.s.	

The mode of preparation is similar to the above.

**LANGCHA.**

The preparation of *Langcha* is similar to that of *Pantoah* but the ingredients are not so choice; particularly the shape is elongated and tapering at both ends.

**DELHI DURBAR.**

This is similar in substance to *Pantoah*. The difference lies in shape. It is a tablet piece  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches square and  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick, dredged in granulated sugar.

**LADY CANNING.**

<i>Chhana</i>	2	lb.
<i>Khoa</i>	8	oz.
Rice flour	4	oz.
Ghee		q.s.
Syrup		q.s.

First grate the *chhana* on a platter and pulverise the *khoa*. Mix together and work in rice flour. Divide the paste into some 5 dozen balls.

Now have some “cardamom candies” for filling. (These are pea-sized candies sold in the market, each inclosing a cardamom seed. For that matter any other sugar candy prepared at home will do). (*Cf. Kamla Rasagolla*). Perfume these with a drop or two of any otto, preferably rose. Put one at the centre of each of the balls of *chhana* and shape it round. The purpose is to create a hollow in the middle

of each sweet which will be filled up with scented syrup obtained through the melting of the sugar candy by heat.

Carefully fry these balls in deep ghee until brown like *Pantoah*. Transfer to the stock syrup.

Instead of using simply sugar candies as filling, minced almonds, pistachios and raisins may be easily put in either singly or in a composite form. Even whole grapes may be contrived to be inclosed in these luscious sweets.

This is said to be of comparatively recent origin being named after Lady Canning, wife of the Governor-General of India to whose memory stands Port Canning.

#### GOLAP JAM.

(*Hindi—Gulab Jamun*).

(*Lit. Rose Apple*).

Khoa	1	lb.
Arrowroot	2	oz.
Ghee		q.s.
Sugar	2	lb.

Rub in half a spoonful of ghee as shortening in the arrowroot. Pulverise and sift the *khoa*. Blend the arrowroot in the *khoa* thoroughly. Knead into a stiff paste with only a sprinkling of water. Perfume the paste with a few drops of rose otto.

Divide the paste into some 50 small pellets of the size of a playing marble. Shape them round with the hand. Fry them in deep ghee until brown. Transfer with the skimmer to the stock syrup.

Take them out when soppy and dredge in granulated sugar. Soaked in syrup they may be passed off as miniature '*Lady Canning*'.

It may be noted here that the arrowroot is added as a binding material. If flour is used instead a little shortening of ghee will help to mask it.

If the foundation paste is not properly worked the balls will loosen and crumble away in the pan thus spoiling the whole thing. In that case a little more arrowroot may be added. The proportion of the binding material and the consistency of the paste may be judiciously ascertained with a little experience. In this connection the toughness of *khoa* is a factor to be taken into consideration.

Being of delicate composition the balls must be fried uniformly throughout the body, avoiding the formation of charred crusts on the surface.

#### MALPOA.

There are several varieties of these pan cakes, some plain and some creamy.

(1) *Flour.*

Flour	1	lb.
Treacle	12	oz.
Mustard oil	8	oz.

Wet the flour, whisk and thin down with water. Mix into it the treacle and make into a smooth consistent batter that will run easily and limpid from the ladle. The treacle may be replaced by syrup, which has served its purpose in soaking other sweets. In that case a proportionately less quantity of water will be required.

Melt a spoonful of ghee on the curved pan (*taoa*) and pour on it a ladleful of the batter. It will spread and form a thick circle (3 inches across). When the ghee is absorbed and the underside fried, pass the spatula round its edges, tear it away smoothly and turn over.

In sauteing these pan cakes the flat pan should be at first thoroughly greased above the surface otherwise the products will get stuck to it.

In America automatic pan cake machines help to save the labour of housewife. By this contrivance, the batter is forced out even at an interval of 10 seconds. When the cake has gone half-way around it is flapped over; when completely cooked it is flipped off.

(2) *Suji.*

Suji	1	lb
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Sugar	1	lb.
Ghee	8	oz.
Water	2	lb.

Rub 1 oz. ghee in the *suji* for shortening.

Soak in a little water and leave aside for 3 to 4 hours. Then thin down with more water. Whisk to a stiff batter. Then proceed as above.

### (3) *Chhana*.

Suji	1	lb.
Chhana	1	lb.
Khoa	8	oz.
Ghee		q.s.

### Stock Syrup

Rub in 1 oz. ghee in the *suji*, thin it with water and leave for two hours. Mash the *chhana* and mix with above. Soak the *khoa* in water for 5 to 10 minutes, then take it out and mix thoroughly with the mixture. Strew a few cardamom seeds. Put the flat pan on the fire and melt ghee in it upto half an inch.

Whisk the drop batter made up as above and take a quantity of it in a large table spoon. Pour the same in a gentle stream on the molten ghee. The mass will spread out in a thin flat circle. Repeat the operation and fill up the surface of the pan; at least 6 to 8 of these cakes can be safely managed at a time. When the sides in contact with the ghee have been fried, gently turn them over one by one with the help

of a pair of wooden sticks. Transfer them to stock syrup when properly fried.

(4) *Kheer.*

Khoa	8 oz.
Suji	4 oz.
Sugar	2 oz.

Make a drop batter by mixing together all the ingredients and thin it down with water. Fry as before. No stock syrup is necessary.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### **RECIPES—Rasagolla, Etc.**

*(Lit. Juicy Balls).*

*Rasagolla* is by far the most popular of all sweets and the most desirable too, if rightly prepared. It is the necessary concomitant of *sandesh*.

Chhana	1 lb.
Suji	$\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
Sugar	5 lb.
Water	$1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Stock syrup (thick)	

Mix the *chhana* and the *suji* and thoroughly grate the whole on a platter. Divide the paste into about a dozen pellets and roll them under hand into round balls. The *suji* is intended as a binding agent but nevertheless it detracts from the quality of the products. (Compare *Sponge Rasagolla*). For preparing *Rasagollas* successfully the heat of the oven should be strong.

Now dissolve the sugar in the water and boil the solution in a deep pan. When the syrup has become sticky enough to spin a

thread, gently drop the above balls one by one into it. Continue boiling for 20 minutes or so, until they are thoroughly cooked. As it is essential that the syrup should maintain a standard consistency throughout this period, it is enjoined to add some water from time to time whenever the syrup gets too thick. But at the same time care must be taken not to make it too thin either. This is just to make up the loss of water through evaporation. The operation is brought to a close by sprinkling a little water on the boiling surface 3 or 4 times at intervals of a minute, care being taken that the drops of water may not fall on the balls. It is complete within five minutes, when the balls become invisible through a heaving froth.

Now have the stock syrup ready beforehand. Lift out the balls with a skimmer and throw into it. It should be thicker than the syrup the balls are cooked in. Moreover, it should be hot, for if the balls are transferred from boiling syrup to cold syrup they will shrink at once and become disfigured. For better effect the balls are made to traverse a series of syrup reservoirs of gradually decreasing temperatures.

There is a simple test to determine whether the *Rasagolla* has been properly cooked or not. Pick out a ball at random while still boiling and immerse it in a quantity of cold stock

syrup. If it collapses and is deformed it still requires to be cooked; on the other hand, if it retains its round shape perfectly it has been properly cooked and the whole lot may be transferred.

*Rasagolla* may also be prepared by the process described under *Rasamundi* (which see) with this difference that while the latter is finally dredged in granulated sugar the former is soaked in syrup up to the last.

One bite of these sops must suffice to let out a mouthful of juice.

#### SPONGE RASAGOLLA.

This variety of the *Rasagolla* is so named because it is porous and absorbent like a sponge. It possesses several distinctive features. In the first place *suji* is absolutely dispensed with. As a result it is more creamy to the taste but at the same time more difficult to prepare.

For preparing *Sponge Rasagolla* it is necessary that the *chhana* should be made freshly at home from pure milk and worked while still hot. The milk may be curdled on the ground to yield soft *chhana* which ensures better results. The remainder of the operation for ordinary *Rasagolla* should be pursued without stop or delay. The heat of the oven should be exceptionally strong and the syrup should be boiling vigorously. Otherwise the balls will crumble away.

**RASKADAM AND KHEERKADAM.**

Two dainties of a twin nature have gained considerable popularity in recent times. These are known as *Raskadam* and *Kheerkadam* resembling as they do “*Kadamba*” the well known ball-shaped saffron-white flower of the rainy season.

(1) *Raskadam*.—The mode of preparation is similar to that of *Danadar*. Those resemble dried *Rasagollas* from which excess syrup has been drained off. They are invariably coloured red and scented with vanilla essence. Finally they are besmeared thoroughly with powdered *Khoa*.

(2) *Kheerkadam*—Prepare *Rasagollah* in the usual manner but cook them a bit hard. Strain them by arranging on a slanting tray to drain off excess syrup. Now prepare a soft pasty mass of *khoa* by cooking in a dry pan with one-fourth sugar and powdered spices for scent and flavour (cardamom *jaiphal* and *dalchini*). Prepare a number of small cup-shaped coverings from this mass and put the above dried *Rasagollas* inside them as pellets and cover up all round as in *Khasta Kachuri*. Finally, roll them on *Khoa* powder. *Kheerkadam* looks white as distinguished from *Raskadam*.

**KAMLA RASAGOLLA.**

*Kamla* is a variety of *Rasagolla* with nice lemon-scented filling.

Its preparation is similar to that of the *Rasagolla*. For filling make some sugar-candies as follows. Take a few dried orange peels and a quantity of sugar. Grind the two together, mix thoroughly and cook for a few minutes, until the mass candies. Make some pills out of this and perfume them with Lemon Essence. Fill each of the balls of *chhana* with pill before cooking them. While boiling, the pills will melt and fill up the centres with scented juice. (See *Lady Canning*).

#### **KHEERMOHON.**

Begin exactly as in the case of *Rasagolla* and form balls of *chhana*. For stuffing pulverise some *khoa* and mix up with it almonds, pistachio and raisins either whole or minced. Divide the mass into pellets. Stuff the balls of *chhana* with these and form by flattening between the palms.

Cook and finish like *Rasagolla*.

#### **RAJBHOG.**

(*Lit.* A Royal Dish).

This is a stuffed *Rasagolla*, double the ordinary size. The stuffing is made up by mixing together *khoa* pulverised, almond and pistachio brayed to a paste and bruised cinnamon, mace, nutmeg, etc.

**NAWABBHOG.**

(*Lit.* Worthy of a Nawab).

This is bigger than the *Rajbhog*—like an orange. It is stuffed with 4 different fillings made up with different scents and flavours inserted in four different quarters of the balls of *chhana*.

**RASOMALAI.**

This, as its name indicates, is a combination of *Rasagolla* and *Malaikheer*.

Prepare some *Rasagolla* in the usual manner (which see). On the other hand have ready a quantity of *kheer*—milk boiled with sugar and kept thin.

Now soak the *Rasagollas* while still hot in the said *kheer* and drench them.

Served cool—with ice or stored in a refrigerator.

**RASAMUNDI.**

(*Lit.* Juicy Pills).

Chhana	1 lb.
Suji	1 oz. or $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
Sugar	2½ lb.

The *chhana* should be compressed as usual. Beat the *chhana* on a platter to a smooth uniform paste. Blend in the *suji*. Give one or two final kneadings and do up neatly. Divide the paste into small pellets the size of

marbles, nearly 100 in number. Form them round by rolling between the palms.

Meanwhile make the syrup with the sugar in a deep pan. When it is boiling thin, drop in the pellets. Boil for about 10 minutes. At this stage take out a pellet with the ladle and pour a little water on it. If the pellet sinks, it is not yet ready. Then boil for some time more. Again repeat the test. If the pellet does not sink, nor shrink, it is ready. Then take a ladleful of water and pour in a fine thread on the surface of the boiling syrup. This should be done in such a way that the bubbling does not cease. When the liquid boils up again after this, remove the pan. After a while lift them out with the skimmer and drain in colander and transfer into a wooden platter scattered over with granulated sugar or castor sugar. Rock the platter gently so that the pellets may be dredged with sugar thoroughly.

#### RASAMUNDI (Another Recipe).

A better quality of *Rasamundi* may be made by working the following recipe:—

Chhana	1	lb.
Khoa	5	oz.
Suji	2	oz.
Ghee	$\frac{1}{2}$	oz.

In this case ghee is rubbed in the *suji* as shortening. Otherwise the product will be tough.

**CHAM CHAM.**

It is prepared like *Rasamundi* from which it differs in shape only being elongated tapering rolls—like cigars and cheroots.

**KALO-JAM.**

(*Lit.* Blackberry).

Chhana	1	lb.
Flour	3	oz.
Sugar		
Ghee		
Soda Bicarb		

Work the soda into the flour. Grate the *chhana* and mix with the flour. Knead the paste and divide into 1 dozen pellets of the size of pigeon's egg. Now dissolve edible black colour in water. Take a little on the palm, smear a pellet with it and fry in deep ghee. It will be purplish in colour.

Immerse in stock syrup until soft.

If there be any objection to the use of black colour mix into the ingredients 3 oz. sugar. This, on being charred in frying, will ensure the peculiar purplish-black coating.

**CHHANABARHA.**

Chhana	2	lb.
Safeda	2	lb.
Ghee	$\frac{1}{4}$	lb.

Rub the ghee in the *safeda* as shortening. Bray the *chhana* and mix into *safeda*. As *safeda* will absorb a great deal of moisture the *paste mixture* will show a tendency to form crust. Therefore sprinkle water from time to time to keep it moist and soft. Indeed it should have the consistency of soft dough. Then make some balls out of the mass and gently fry them in deep ghee. When properly fried transfer them to stock syrup contained in an iron pan.

After the whole mass is finished the iron pan, together with the soaked balls in it, should be heated to bring the syrup to a boil. Just when ebullition occurs, take the pan off the oven and cover up with a big wooden platter. The simmering that will continue for some time will soften the interior of the sops. It will also serve the purpose of cooking the *safeda* which will otherwise make the product tough.

#### **LALMOHAN.**

Proceed exactly as above. But instead of frying the balls in ghee and then soaking them in syrup, cook them in boiling syrup like *Rasagollas* (which see). This operation is a somewhat difficult one as the balls are apt to wear away and thus lose shape.

#### **DANADAR.**

**Chhana**  
B. S. 9.

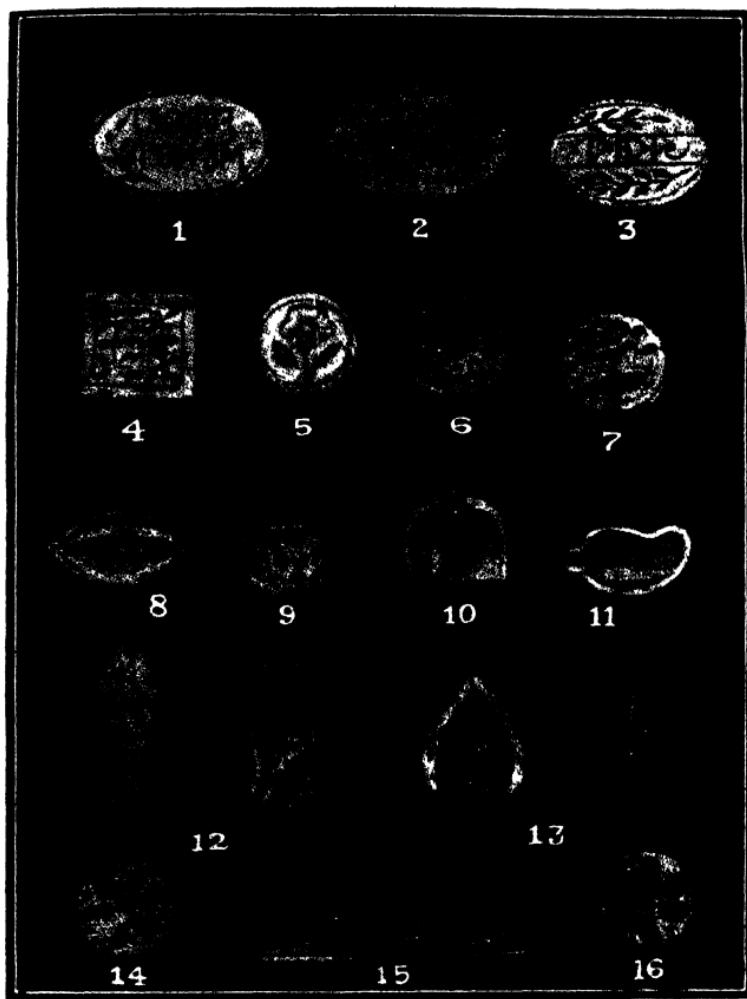
**2 lb.**

Suji	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz.
Sugar	3 lb.

Press the *chhana* hard and dry. Mix the *suji* and whisk to a soft paste. Divide into 30 pellets and form them into rounds like *Rasa-golla*. Then boil in syrup. Remove from fire when the syrup becomes very thick. Move them all about the sides of the pan with the paddle. Strew over 8 oz. granulated sugar and leave for half an hour to dry. Then strew over one pound more sugar, stir briskly, cover up and set aside for 8 to 10 hours. The balls will dry up completely and appear like crystallised fruit.

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## MOULDS FOR SANDESH.



1. Forget-me-not, 2. Wooden Blank for 1 & 3, 3. Abak,
4. Rai Takti, 5. Violet, 6. Kasturi, 7. Rose and  
Nightingale, 8. Kamranga, 9. Ata, 10. Talsash, 11. Am,
12. Fish (pair), 13. Monoranjan (pair), 14 & 16. Raskara  
(counter parts), 15. Chandrapuli.

*To face p. 130]*



## CHAPTER XVII.

### RECIPES—Sandesh.

#### SANDESH.

*Sandesh* may be styled the Queen of Bengal Sweets.

There are so many varieties of this most joyable sweet that it is not possible to give a comprehensive list of them all. Only the representative types are enumerated below without prejudice to those left out. The more important and well-known varieties are described individually.

The names of the numerous varieties of *Sandesh* have been derived from all conceivable sources. Primarily the names designate accustomed shapes, such as *Gutke* (flat tipped), *Badam Takti* (diamond), *Kasturo*, etc. Latterly they express the delightful feeling associated with *Sandesh* such as *Monohara* (captivating), *Monoranjan* (pleasing to the mind), *Delkhosh* (delight of the heart), etc. The analogy with natural objects is another fruitful source; such as, *Ata* (custard apple); *Kamranga* (a sour plum); *Talshash* (palmyra kernel) and so on.

In the selection of fanciful names, however, which are more prolific, imagination is

given free play. There are some typical Bengali names the points of which will be wellnigh lost in translation: *Abar Khabo* (Encore), *Phulsayya* (Honey Moon), *Sukhe Theko* (God Bless You), *Pati Param Guru* (Husband is wife's saviour). The purely English names "Good Morning," "Wel-come," "God Save the King," "Forget-me-not" and the like are significant of cultural influence.

Be it noted in this connection that the foundation paste of all these *Sandesh* is practically the same; they are simply moulded into different forms.

In the main, the ingredients entering into the composition of *Sandesh* are the same, viz., *chhana* and sugar. It is all the more wonderful how innumerable varieties of *Sandesh* are made from these two simple materials. The elements which determine the quality of the product are their relative proportion and flavouring. A good deal depends also on the treatment of *chhana* and sugar. *Chhana* may be pressed to difficult degrees of dryness. Sugar may be added either powdered or in the form of syrup. It may be substituted in part by jaggery. Cooking is also a decisive factor, for on it depends the consistency of the paste. *Kara-pak* or hard cooked *Sandesh* is mealy, while *Naram-pak* or soft cooked *Sandesh* is sloppy. The taste is sometimes improved upon

by the addition of *khoa* and *mcwa*. Lastly, novelties are effected by scents and colours.

#### **GUR IN LIEU OF SUGAR.**

Due to the exigencies of the Second World War (1939-45) sugar became a rationed article, along with other foodstuff and great scarcity of this essential commodity was felt by the general public during the continuande of the Rationing system in the urban areas of India. Indeed at one time supply of sugar was totally stopped to confectioners of Calcutta while the weekly rations of the citizens were severely curtailed. As is to be expected it adversely affected the confectionery business and for months sweetmeats could not by be had in the market either for love or money.

Resourceful confectioners however replaced sugar by gur (jaggery) in the preparation of sweetmeats. Of course, gur from date palm is ordinarily used in the winter season for the preparation of a special variety of sandesh. But in the present instance jaggery from sugar-cane as well as that from ordinary palm were also requisitioned as substitutes.. Sandesh made of palm gur tasted like Nalin gur sandesh and was relished. But ordinary cane gur imparted, in a majority of cases, somewhat sour taste which was disliked. Moreover, the sweetmeats prepared with cane jaggery wore a dull appearance.

Of course, more careful confectioners selected gur of superior quality and produced articles of tolerable taste.

There is a simple process of refining, and deodorising jaggery to some extent by centrifuging it in a hydro-extractor and sprinkling solution of sodium carbonate (washing soda). But the resulting product acquires a definite salt taste which is naturally imparted to sweetmeats made with it. However, chocolate essence blends nicely with all kinds of gur and if used in the preparation of sweets with gur, it will impart a pleasant flavour making them more palatable.

#### **GENERAL PRINCIPLE.**

The general principle underlying the preparation of *Sandesh* is now detailed fully and should be pursued in making the different varieties.

Chhana	2 lb.
Sugar	8 oz.

Two methods are usually in vogue for cooking *Sandesh*: (1) Sugar method and (2) Syrup method. In the first method the *chhana* need not be squeezed very hard as the little whey in it will assist in melting the sugar which is added in the dry powdered form. In the second method the *chhana* is squeezed hard and the sugar is dissolved in water and made into syrup. It is admitted, however, that *San-*

*desh* prepared by the first method tastes better than that made by the second method.

The quality of *Sandesh* is improved by increasing the quantity of *chhana* and decreasing that of sugar. We give the proportions for the four ordinarily recognised qualities:—

No. 1.	Chhana 2 lbs.	Sugar 8 oz.
No. 2.	" "	10 oz.
No. 3.	" "	12 oz.
No. 4.	" "	1 lb.

Needless to point out that No. 1 is the best quality. It is not possible to make anything superior to it. Anything inferior to No. 4 may be appropriately described as sugar candy.

#### (A) Sugar Method.

It will be relevant here to point out again that *chhana* is ordinarily soggy, holding a portion of whey. Whenever required for the preparation of a sweetmeat it should, therefore, be squeezed. By taking nearly double the amount prescribed and squeezing it in a new piece of cloth, the milky liquid is eliminated and the weight considerably reduced. This is effected on a large scale by pressing *chhana* between two wooden planks, the upper one being weighted with stones, iron, etc. (Please refer to *Treatment of Chhana* pp. 41—43).

All this, however, is not often necessary in the case of home-made *chhana* which is tolerably compact.

Firm *chhana* when available in the market can be efficiently drained simply by placing it on a slanting plank. Instead of squeezing some persons prefer to bake the *chhana* on the pan to dry it for a few minutes.

Mash the compressed *chhana* on a wooden platter bit by bit as if braying. If possible repeat twice. Mix the sugar (in powder) thoroughly. Then cook the stuff for 15 minutes in a shallow pan on a very slow oven, stirring all the while with the broad wooden spatula. Throughout the operation the fire should be damped with the fire damper and the mass should be agitated unceasingly as otherwise the paste has every chance of getting scorched and being spoilt. The cooking must be done attentively. In preparing *Sandesh* the confectioner knows no rest.

*Sandesh* is properly cooked when it draws away from the sides of the pan. Then take away, scoop out on a plate, do up into a neat lump. On cooling it becomes a firm paste.

#### (B) Syrup Method.

Put the sugar in a shallow pan, add a little water and boil to a thin syrup. Mash the *chhana* like braying and throw the lump into the syrup. Agitate the stuff incessantly with the paddle (*taru*). The fire must be slack so long as the *chhana* does not dissolve. Then the fire damper is removed. The thickening

mass now requires to be agitated vigorously. The paste will soon begin to draw away from the sides of the pan. It is tested as follows: Take a little on the hand; it will feel scorching, but immediately it will feel cool. Then it is properly cooked. Otherwise it will not dry.

At this stage remove the pan from the fire. Gather the paste in a lump in the middle. Break off little by little with the paddle and spread on the upper parts of the pan near the brim. As soon as this portion is cooled it is scraped and brought down on the lump. When the whole paste is thus artificially cooled, form into desired shapes with wooden moulds.

It is apparent that the consistence of the paste may be easily brought up to the desired degree of firmness. By ceasing to cool the paste (by spreading) a little earlier or a little later the resulting *Sandesh* is either soft cooked or hard cooked. Naturally enough some prefer the former and others the latter.

#### *Moulding.*

By either of the above methods the foundation paste only is obtained. It is made into different varieties by incorporating colourings and flavourings, and shaping with wooden moulds. A wooden mould for *Sandesh* is made in two halves, one being the counterpart of the other, similar to cake forms. The two fit together accurately leaving only a small aperture

through which the paste (in pellets) is to be forced in. The inside of the moulds is engraved with suitable designs or inscriptions which appear in prominent relief later on.

In other moulds only the upper surface is printed and the underside is pressed with a wooden blank.

#### **AM SANDESH.**

Chhana	1	lb.
Sugar	.6	oz.
Mango ginger	q.s.	

Prepare *Sandesh* with *chhana* and sugar as usual.

Wash the mango-ginger; peel slice and pound. Express the juice.

When the paste of *Sandesh* has become quite cold incorporate into it about two spoonfuls of the juice. On no account should it be added while the paste is hot, as the scent will then fade away. It may also be added to the paste just before forming.

After the addition of the flavouring agent the paste should be thoroughly kneaded and then formed into small mango shapes with wooden moulds.

#### **LEBU SANDESH.**

Chhana	1	lb.
Sugar	6	oz.
Lemon peel	q.s.	

The rind of a whole orange will be required to flavour about two pounds of *Sandesh*. If the rinds of fresh fruit be available, well and good; otherwise the dried peels have to be soaked in water for 2 to 3 hours.

Proceed to make *Sandesh* with *chhana* and sugar as usual. When beginning to cook throw in the rinds and stir with the paddle taking care that the rinds do not get mangled or broken. When the paste is cooked, pick out the rinds and the *sandesh* will have been nicely flavoured. Roll out to 1 inch thick; cut into 1 inch square. Garnish with pistachio. Most probably the same purpose will be served by adding a few drops of lemon oil. Try it.

#### MUSK SANDESH.

Chhana	$2\frac{1}{2}$	lb.
Sugar	10	oz.
Essence of Musk	10	min.

Prepare the foundation paste from *chhana* and sugar and thoroughly mix the essence of musk. Divide into pellets and press into forms with suitable inscriptions.

*Musk Sandesh* is best made into small sized oval tablets. This sweet is invigorating, musk being a well-known stimulant. It is deliciously perfumed.

#### MONOHARA.

Chhana	1	lb.
Sugar	6	oz.

Khoa	4	oz.
Cardamom minor	2	

Mash the *khoa* with sprinkling of water; knead and do it up neatly. Snatch 2 dozen small pellets from it to serve as filling.

Make the foundation paste with *chhana* and sugar by the usual method. In this particular case it should be rather hard cooked. Take away from fire and mix in powdered cardamom seeds. Divide the paste into 2 dozen rounds. Flatten each between the palms and make a dent with the thumb. Put in the filling and close up. Form round.

#### BADAM TAKTI.

Chhana	1	lb.
Sugar	6	oz.
Pistachio	q.s.	

Make the foundation paste like *Monohara*. Mix in chopped pistachio. Pour in plates and allow to set. When stiff cut out diamond shapes. Garnish with silver leaves.

#### KAMINIDANA.

Chhana	1	lb.
Sugar	6	oz.
Poppy seed	q.s.	

Make the foundation paste like *Monohara*. Mix in baked poppy seed. Form into ovals.

## ABAR KHABO.

Chhana	1	lb.
Sugar	4	oz.
Khoa	4	oz.
Pistachio		q.s.
Cream		q.s.

Cook *chhana* and sugar for the foundation paste, rather soft. Divide the paste into 20 balls.

For the filling, pulverise *khoa* and mince pistachio. Mix up and divide in pellets.

Put a pellet inside each ball of foundation paste and mould round with hands.

Each *Sandesh* is finally crowned with a piece of thick cream about 1 inch square.

## CHITTARANJAN SANDESH.

Chhana	2½	lb.
Sugar	10	oz.
Khoa	4	"
Mewa	2	"
Saffron	5	grs.

Gold Leaf

This is one of the finest varieties of *Sandesh* ever invented. It has been named after the great Indian patriot Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, the first Mayor of Calcutta.

This is a stuffed *Sandesh* and accordingly the stuffing should be prepared at first and kept handy. Pulverise the *khoa*. Blanch almonds and pistachios, shred them fine, and mix

with *khoa*. Soak saffron in a spoonful of milk and blend with the stuffing in the manner of *Delkhosh Sandesh*.

Next *chhana* and sugar should be cooked in the manner of making *Sandesh* but an uncommon degree of fineness is called for. Allow the paste to cool down. Divide into about 50 or 60 pellets. Spread each in the shape of a butter scoop with a little dent in the centre; put in a stuffing pellet, close up and gently form into an ovoid shape exactly in the manner of *Khasta Kachuri* (which are).

## II.

Add a few drops a vanilla scent into the stuffing: when it is used as pellets the scent will permeate through the covering, i.e., the entire *sandesh*, and will be discernible with every bite. The effect is very fascinating and has been liked by every one. The top side is finally tipped with gold leaves for lovely flourish.

### CHOP SANDESH.

Chhana	1	lb.
Sugar	4	oz.
Khoa	4	"
Mewa	q.s.	
Hot Spices	q.s.	
Poppy seed	q.s.	

Prepare the foundation paste with *chhana* and sugar, rather soft. Divide into 16 balls.

For the stuffing pulverise *khoa*, mince *mewa*, pound ‘hot spices,’ mix all together and divide into pellets.

Stuff a ball with a pellet, form round and flatten with the hands.

Finally dredge each *sandesh* with baked poppy seeds.

This is the milky prototype of the mutton chop.

#### CHOCOLATE SANDESH.

Chhana	$2\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Sugar	10 oz.
Cocoa Powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.

The European confections known as chocolates are made from Cocoa powder, sugar, etc. Cocoa is derived from a kind of bean and is known as vegetable butter. It is therefore highly nutritious.

Cook *chhana*, and sugar in the usual manner to prepare foundation paste of *Sandesh*. Divide the paste into three equal batches. Incorporate cocoa powder into the first batch when the mass will assume chocolate colour. Spread out the second batch about one-fourth inch thick on a wooden platter. On this layer spread out the first batch of chocolate mixture. Finally spread out the third batch. Thus we get a mass of three layers with plain *Sandesh* at top and bottom and in between them chocolate Sandwich.

Now cut the mass into pieces of diamond shape. Garnish each with silver leaf for dazzling spectacular effect.

#### **HARA-GAURI SANDESH.**

This is another variety of sandwich *Sandesh* consisting of three layers—the bottom being plain *Sandesh*, middle one tinted yellow, and the top tinted red. Proceed in the manner of chocolate *Sandesh*.

#### **ALMOND-PISTACHIO-SAFFRON SANDESH.**

Another variety of *Sandwich Sandesh* may be made by spreading out three layers of *Almond Sandesh*, *Pistachio Sandesh* and *Saffron Sandesh*.

#### **ROYAL SWEET SANDESH.**

Chhana	5	lb.
Khoa	12	oz.
Pistachio	12	oz.
Sugar	1½	lb.
Gold leaf	q.s.	

Steep the pistachios in water for some hours. Remove the skins by rasping and bray into a fine pulp.

Prepare ordinary *Sandesh* with *chhana* and sugar. Pulverise the *khoa* and add it to the above mass while it is still soft. Remove from fire when rather stiff. Now add the pistachio pulp to this foundation paste and

incorporate thoroughly. Spread the whole stuff uniformly on a platter ( $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick or less) and gently press to make it close-grained. Embellish by stretching over the surface a thin gold leaf. Carve with a table knife into diamond shapes. The colour will be greenish and glittering.

#### **PARSEE BARFI.**

Proceed exactly as above. But in place of pistachio and gold leaf, substitute real almonds and silver leaf. The colour will be glazed white.

#### **MONMOHAN.**

Chhana	5	lb.
Khoa	$\frac{3}{4}$	lb.
Sugar	$1\frac{1}{4}$	lb.
Pistachio	6	oz.
Almonds	6	"
Raisins	4	"
Saffron	45	grs.

Prepare the foundation paste of *Sandesh* with *chhana*, sugar and *khoa* as before. Remove the mass from the fire and add the saffron blended in a little hot milk. Mix intimately to ensure even distribution of colour.

Transfer to a dish, spread into 1 inch thick and press to form a compact mass. Strew over finely shredded almonds and pistachios. Sprinkle a few drops of rose otto. Cut into

diamond shapes. Fix a pair of raisins and crimson rose petal on each. The colour will be brown. Notice the coloration of the above three varieties, viz., green, white and brown.

#### **KHEER-CHHANA SANDESH.**

Chhana	2 lb.
Kheer	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Sugar	$1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Mewa	

This is a very convenient variety of *Sandesh* albeit palatable to taste. It is the easiest to make at home at short notice.

In this case *chhana* need not be squeezed so hard as in the case of ordinary *Sandesh*. It would suffice if *chhana* be allowed to drip in a kerchief suitably hung up. Then mash it on a wooden platter. Pulverise the *khoa*. Mix up the two thoroughly and incorporate sugar.

Now take this mass in a pan and cook like *Sandesh* for about 15 or 20 minutes stirring all the while with *taru*. Take down while still soft. Pour out the paste on a plate when tepid warm; divide into pellets and press into suitable forms, say, *Kamranga*.

#### **KANCHAGOLLA.**

Chhana	1 lb.
Sugar	6 oz.

The peculiarity of this *Sandesh* is that unlike other varieties it is grainy. For this

purpose the *chhana*, though pressed to free it from water, must not be grated down as is usually to be expected. This point should be carefully noted as the only exception.

Now prepare a syrup with the sugar, and when it is thickening throw in the lump of *chhana*. Disintegrate the stuff with the paddle. Do not cook for long but remove while still sloppy. Form into 2 dozen rounds when cool. It is cooked somewhat raw (whence the name) and, on storing, the syrup oozes out which furnishes a simple test. Otherwise the product will be stiff.

The cooked mass should be granular in appearance and not pasty.

#### **GOLAPI PERA.**

(*Lit.* Rose Tablets).

Proceeding exactly as above cook the product a little longer so that whole of the syrup is absorbed.

Perfume the mass with rose water, form into small rounds, flatten and fix a rose petal on each.

#### **CHHANAR PAYESH.**

Chhana	5	lb.
Milk	2	lb.
Sugar	1½	lb.

This is a semi-liquid variety of the *Sandesh*. Boil down the milk to a consistency mid-

used in very small doses so as to impart only mild aroma. Bigger quantities might spoil the thing with strong odour.

The requisite doses of vanilla may be blended with the paste of *Sandesh* or better still with the stuffing as in the case of Chittaranjan *Sandesh* (which see). In the case of *Rasagolla* pineapple scent is carefully blended with the stock syrup, diluted with water if necessary, by thorough agitation. Then *Rasagollas* are soaked in the perfumed syrup when the scent will permeate through them after absorption of syrup.

A variety of scents is available in the market for use in confectionery. There is no harm in using them although only the best quality is to be employed. If desired a distinctive scent can be prepared by blending 2 or 3 essences in suitable proportions. Such special scents might enhance the reputation of a professional confectioner while it will be difficult for others to imitate the secret.

Similarly, many edible colours are available in the market. They are also harmless being mostly of vegetable origin. These yield spectacular effect but should be used sparingly.

These essences and colours are commonly used in ice creams, drinks, etc.

When complete each *Sandesh* is tipped with a piece of gold leaf for gorgeous effect.



An improved variety of this *Sandesh* is made as follows:—

Add a few drops of vanilla scent into the stuffing. When it is used as pellets the scent will permeate through the covering, that is, through the entire *Sandesh* and will be discernible with every bite. The effect is very fascinating and has been welcomed for a delight whoever has tasted it.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### RECIPES—Khoa & Milk Preparations.

#### MEWAR LAROO.

Khoa	1 lb.
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Granulated Sugar	1 lb.
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Pulverise the *khoa* and sift. The smaller the grains of sugar, the better. Incorporate the two things together thoroughly. Strew a handful of currants. Form the mass into 2 doz. balls by rolling under hands.

#### PERA (TABLETS).

Milk	2 lb.
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Sugar	2 oz.
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Dissolve the sugar in the milk. Boil for half an hour or more, stirring all the while with a ladle, otherwise the milk will boil over. When it begins to thicken, scrape the bottom and sides constantly with the paddle; otherwise it will get charred. Remove when only about 6 or 7 oz. of a plastic mass is left. (See the instructions for making *khoa*).

When cool divide the paste into about a dozen pellets. Mould them into rounds with hands and form into flat shapes by gently pressing within the palms. Fix a pair of raisins on each and dredge in granulated sugar.

These *peras* being condensed solid milk are somewhat rich.

### **GUJIA.**

The basis of this sweet is the same as that of *Pera*. The foundation paste is however divided into small pellets each being subsequently formed into rings—of the size and shape of actual finger rings.

### **KHEER SANDESH.**

Khoa	2 lb.
Sugar	8 oz.

Pulverise *khoa* and sift. Boil sugar in water to thick syrup. Add the *khoa* and cook like *Sandesh* (Syrup method). Remove when the paste is rather firm but still plastic and pliable. So far it is in the nature of *Barfi* (which see) but stiffer.

Now form the paste into different fruit models, wooden moulds for which are available. Insert stalks, colour suitably or otherwise finish so as to resemble different fruits.

Practically all kinds of fruits may be imitated in this manner, as for example, mango, litchi, jambolan, pomegranate, rose apple, banana, etc. They are finished to such a nicety as easily to dupe the unwary. An array of these artificial fruits often serves as a delicate presentation.

**BARFI.**

Khoa	2 lb.
Sugar	8 oz.

This is a sort of 'cream pudding.' First pulverise the *khoa* breaking the lumps; sift through a sieve, twice or thrice, to get a fine powder. Next boil sugar and water until the syrup ropes when dropped from a fork. Gradually add the *khoa* powder to the syrup and mix well agitating the mass on slack fire with the wooden spatula (*taru*).

Take away from the fire when the mass is of the consistency of butter. Sprinkle rose water, raisins, etc., and pour out the stuff into a pie dish upto 1 inch thick and allow to set. The syrup must have been of such a consistency that this mass hardens within 6 to 8 hours. Finally carve out the solid stuff with a table knife into one inch square tablets.

**KALAKAND.**

Khoa	2 lb.
Sugar	8 oz.

Prepare a syrup from the sugar and continue boiling until it is nearly dry. Scrape out the sugar candy into a patter and bray to a fine powder. The sugar is subjected to this special treatment whenever it is required to prevent the sweetmeat from absorbing moisture from the atmosphere. The process has

already been described more fully under “transformed sugar.”

Now pulverise the *khoa* and sift it. Add to it the transformed sugar obtained as above. Thoroughly incorporate the two ingredients on a platter. Sprinkle rose water, shredded almonds, chopped pistachios and handful of raisins. Heavily press the mixed mass into a solid block one inch thick with an even surface. Set aside for a few hours to form and then cut into square tablets (1½ in.).

#### SARER LAROO.

(*Lit.* Balls of Cream).

Milk	6	lb.
Khoa	2	lb.
Sugar	8	oz.

Convert the sugar into “transformed” sugar as before. Pound the *khoa*, not necessarily into powder. The lumps, may be left more or less large sized. Bake the mass lightly on an iron pan (*taoa*) over a very slack fire. Have these two ingredients ready.

Now boil the milk in a shallow pan and fan it with the left hand. (For this purpose the fan of palmyra leaves sold in the market will be useful). By this method clotted creams will be formed on the artificially cooled surface of the boiling milk. With a wooden stick (*kathi*) in the right hand pick up the films as soon as they appear and paste them in layers on

all sides of the pan high above the milk. In this way new surfaces of the milk will be continually exposed and cooled, in turn, helping the formation of cream. Continue in this manner until only milk is left. A very slack oven is desirable throughout the operations. (*C. f. Sar.* P33).

Scrape off these creamy layers with the spatula and transfer to a plate. Add to the mass the pounded *khoa* and the "transformed" sugar made ready as above. Mix together these three ingredients and perfume with rose otto. Take by handfuls and mould into round balls. If desired, paste an additional square piece of cream on each.

The milk residue may be used up as condensed milk.

#### RABRI.

Milk	6 lb.
Sugar	6 oz.

*Rabri* may be briefly described as cream soaked in *Kheer*. To prepare this sweet the operation described in the latter part of the above recipe, namely, that for the preparation of clotted cream is to be repeated. (*C.f. Sar* P. 33).

Put the milk in an iron pan on fire and continue boiling. Fan it unceasingly by the left hand and by the right collect the films of cream appearing from time to time on the cool-

ed surface with a wooden stick; and amass them on the sides of pan. When the milk has thus been boiled down to only  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb., dissolve the sugar in it. Now scrape off the layers of cream from the sides of the pan and immerse them into the thick sweetened milk residue. After a while remove from the fire and allow the creams to be soaked sweet for an hour. Sprinkle rose water.

To best enjoy it put a piece of ice in a cupful and sip it off. It is generally served last of all other sweets.

#### **MALAI.**

*Malai* may be simply described as ‘clotted cream.’ It is in fact unsweetened *Rabri* and may be prepared in the same way, only omitting sugar. (*C. f. Sar P.* 33).

#### **SARBHAJA.**

Milk

Ghee

Syrup

Scald the milk in a wide iron pan over fire, using wood as fuel, if possible. When the surface of the milk heaves up for the first time, raise and pour the milk with the ladle. Continue agitating for a quarter of an hour to ensure thick foam. Then slow down the fire and allow to simmer. Leave the milk as it is

for 3 or 4 hours. (Of course the fire must have slackened). By this time a thick cream (*sar*) will form on the surface. Carefully detach it from the pan by passing a broad knife round its circular rim. Gently slip it off on to a plate, placing the moist underside up. Let the few drops of milk adhering to it trickle down by holding the plate in a slanting position.

Divide the cream into four quadrants. It may also be cut into square or oblong pieces (1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch). Melt ghee in a flat iron pan (*tai*) and fry very gently the pieces of cream one by one. Care should be taken that they are not charred. Place in thick syrup to soak.

This is a very valued sweet, toothsome and creamy.

The thickened milk left as residue after the cream is taken off may also be utilised by sweetening it and making *Khecr*.

#### SARPURIA.

Milk	10	lb.
Chhana	$2\frac{1}{2}$	lb.
Khoa	1	lb.
Sugar	12	oz.
Almonds	4	oz.
Pistachio	2	oz.
Saffron	60	gr.

Prepare three pieces of cream by boiling the milk in three lots in separate pans accord-

ing to the process described in *Sarbhaja*. Have them ready after dripping.

Now grate together the chhana and the sugar and cook like *Sandesh*. Pulverise the *khoa* and slightly bake the powder on a dry pan over slack fire. Mix together these stuffs intimately. Work in the saffron blended in a little hot milk to ensure brown colour and characteristic fragrance. Strew over finely chopped almonds and pistachios (skinned and blanched). Divide the mass into two batches.

Fully stretch out one piece of cream on a plate and spread over it evenly half the foundation mass prepared above. On this stretch out a second piece of cream and spread over it the remaining half of the foundation mass as a sort of stuffing. Lastly cover this up by stretching the third piece of cream. The whole must look like a cake 2 or 3 inches thick.

Carve out and serve. It is a most aristocratic sweetment.

• DUDH-SUJI.

Milk	2	lb.
Suji	1	oz.
Sugar	8	oz.

Scald the milk. Throw in *suji*, stirring all the while. Melt the sugar. Cook for 15 minutes and remove when it tightens like batter.

Before addition the *suji* may be stewed in a little ghee; that will greatly improve the taste.

### PALO.

Milk	2	lb.
Sathi	2	oz.
Sugar	8	oz.

Scald the milk and dissolve the sugar in it. Blend the sathi in a little water breaking the clots, otherwise it will lump and spoil the milk. When the milk is boiling vigorously pour the blended *sathi* in a stream stirring briskly (ladling). Cook for a few minutes until the mixture is uniform and take away when it thickens.

This is a very soothing preparation and forms a convalescent diet.

### PALOR BARFI.

Milk	2	lb.
Sathi	4	oz.
Sugar	10	oz.

Proceed exactly as above. Only the *sathi* is to be added in a quantity sufficient to give body to the milk on cooling. The mixture is poured on a pie dish; it sets on cooling and is then cut into diamond shapes.

### KHEER-KAMLA.

Milk	2	lb.
Sugar	8	oz.
Oranges	2	

Boil down the milk with sugar as if making thick *kheer*. Peel the oranges; reject the skin and stones in the cores. Take only the juicy cells and scatter them over the condensed milk. Thicken the milk a little more and remove.

**FIRNI.**

Kamini Rice	2	oz.
Milk	2	lb.
Sugar	8	oz.

Procure good *kamini* rice with its delicate aroma. Soak it in water until soft. Grate to a fine paste. Scald the milk and dissolve the sugar in it. Blend the rice paste in a little water and pour in a stream on the boiling milk. Stir briskly all the while. If precautions are not taken it will lump at the bottom of the pan. Cook for 10 minutes and then remove.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### RECIPES—Miscellaneous.

#### KUMRAR-MITHAI.

*Kumrar Mithai* is made from white pumpkins, or strictly speaking, melon pumpkins (*sanchi kumra*). These pumpkins are hung up after being plucked and keep remarkably well for the greater part of the year. They mature with age, the skin becoming white.

Take such a “hoary” pumpkin; peel it; divide into four parts; remove the seeds and slimes. Prick the flesh with a fork until it is punctured through and through. This is essential for proper cooking and then cut into small cubical pieces the size of chocolates. For every pound of these cubes take an equal quantity of sugar and  $\frac{1}{4}$  oz. alum. A few drops of rose water will also be required.

Soak the pumkin cubes for an hour or two in cold water. Then boil them in a solution of alum. Drain in a colander and when cold wash the cubes in several changes of water. Next melt the sugar in water and boil to make thin syrup. Throw the alumed cubes into the syrup and continue boiling until they are soft and tender. Remove when nearly dry,

and perfume with rose otto. On cooling, the sugar will form granulated coating on the cubes.

These toothsome confections which are in the nature of crystallised fruits, can be preserved for a long time if properly prepared and carefully packed. Sometimes the pumpkin pieces are removed from the pan when the syrup has not become quite dry and is used as sops. But then they cannot be preserved for long. These fruit confections are easily prescribed to convalescents.

#### **BAELER MORABBA.**

It is a fruit preserve prepared from *Bael* or Bengal Quince. Procure unripe fruits and remove their skins. It is a tough job requiring sharp and heavy knives. Slice them into flat circles and cut the big circles into halves. Remove the seeds, wash clean and soak in water for half an hour.

Now parboil the slices in water but do not make them too soft. Drain in colander. Take the slices and sugar together in a pan and put on fire. The sugar will melt because of the wet slices and become syrup. If this be not the case, a very small quantity of water may be added. Stir the slices constantly, otherwise they will get charred at the bottom. When the syrup becomes thick and viscous, the slices are

thoroughly cooked and sweet, remove from fire and store in suitable vessels.

For this purpose iron pans will not be suitable; aluminium vessels should be used instead. One pound of sugar will be required for a medium-sized *Bael*.

#### "BENGAL PUDDING."

Albeit a little outside the scope of this book the following recipe for a novel kind of Pudding is prescribed as being quite original. It is a modification of a European Sweet in the light of the confectionery of Bengal. It may be noted that the recipe has given entire satisfaction to whomsoever it has been recommended and it is expected that it would also prove popular with the general body of readers.

Chhana	1	lb.
Khoa	4	oz.
Sugar	1	lb.
Egg	5 to 8.	
Almonds		q.s.
Pistachios		q.s.
Raisins		q.s.
Rose Water		q.s.

Squeeze the *chhana* to make it compact. Take it in a bowl and bray to a pulp. Pulverise and sift the *khoa*. Incorporate it evenly with the *chhana*.

Next mix the sugar thoroughly into the mass.

Now beat the contents of the eggs in a bowl for 10 to 15 minutes with an egg-beater until the froth rises considerably. If only the yolks are employed, then 8 to 10 eggs will be required. Pour the egg-froth in the mixture of *chana*, *khoa* and sugar and whisk to a smooth batter.

Almonds and pistachios (soaked and blanched) may be added either shredded or brayed to a pulp. In the latter case the taste of the product will be better. The raisins should be washed and stalked.

Finally, perfume the above uniform mixture with a dessert-spoonful of rose water.

Now this batter has to be cooked "with steam." For this purpose it may be spread one inch thick on a pie dish fitting exactly at the mouth of a deep pan. Water is boiled in this pan and the steam while escaping cooks the batter. The dish is covered with a plate and to hasten the cooking, pieces of live charcoal are placed on the top. But this method of cooking is cumbrous and takes much time. Even at that the cooking is not satisfactory.

The batter is most satisfactorily cooked in one of the patent "cookers" sold in the market, say, Ic-mic Cooker or better still Grihastha Cooker. The batter is distributed into 3 or 4

cups of the cooker (like a tiffin carrier) which are inserted in the cylinder. There is water at the bottom of the cylinder which being heated generates steam and this circulates all round the pots thereby cooking their contents excellently. Cooking in a cooker requires only one hour from start to finish. The batter sets and becomes firm. \*

The cups are allowed to cool; then the contents are emptied on a tray, carved into diamond shapes, iced and served.

## CHAPTER XX.

### PRESERVATION OF SWEETS.

SOME of the *Bengal Sweets* may be preserved by adopting the process of canning fruits and vegetables. Sugar and salt are by themselves great natural preservatives and therefore fruits and vegetables are generally preserved in syrup and brine respectively.

Of all sweets the preservation of sops like *Rasagolla* and *Pantoah* appears to be comparatively easy inasmuch as they are already immersed in syrup. The method is briefly described here.

Procure some tin cans of the size of barley or patent food containers. Thoroughly sterilize them with boiling water; keep the lids and soldering materials ready.

Now transfer a requisite number of *Rasa-golla*, just finished preparation, from the boiling pan direct to the tin can, say 8 or 10 pieces. Along with them pour a quantity of boiling syrup into the can to fill up to the brim. The transfer is to be effected by ladle. Then place the lid on the can and seal air-tight but make a small hole in the centre of the lid with a nail.

Now boil water in a suitable basin and place the can in it. The water should cover at least half portion of the can.. While steam is coming out from the hole of the lid, quickly close it up with solder. Then allow the can to cool down. The steam inside will condense creating a vacuum which helps to preserve the contents. Moreover, as the entire operation is subjected to boiling heat all bacteria are destroyed leaving no chance for putrefaction.

It will be rather difficult to preserve *Sandesh*. But the procedure is similar. The can is filled up to the brim with *kara pak Sandesh* when just made and still simmering. The can is next placed in the basin of boiling water, the lid set on and soldered as before. It should be remembered that greater the proportion of sugar in *Sandesh*, the greater is the chance of preservation.

Preservation of *Laddo*, *Pera*, etc. may be tried similarly.

Success in preservation is achieved by observing utmost cleanliness. The materials to be preserved should on no account be touched by hand while the accessories should be cleansed with boiling water.

## CONCLUSION.

Efforts have been made in the preceding pages to give as full and detailed particulars as possible of the multifarious processes involved in the preparation of Bengali sweet-meats. Amateur chefs are expected to master the art by strictly adhering to the modes of procedure described herein. The recipes are, as a rule, tested and tried and as such they can safely be relied upon as accurate.

It should, however, be borne in mind that success can be achieved only through industry, perseverance and experience gained through failures; and that no amount of application will enable home preparations to match some of the standard products of the reputable confectioners, particularly *sandesh* and *rasagolla*: though in respect of other sweets home made articles are certainly purer and more dainty. Nevertheless a great degree of perfection may be attained by being careful about the purity and freshness of the ingredients used and by paying attention to the directions even to the minutest details.

## GLOSSARY.

Ajwan seed, <i>joan</i> .	Ginger, <i>adrak, ada</i> .
Almonds, <i>badam</i> .	Gram, <i>chana, chhola, boot</i> .
Aniseed, <i>mauri</i> .	Gram, black, <i>kalai (mash)</i> .
Asafoetida, <i>hing</i> .	Gram, cow, <i>barbati</i> .
Bengal Quince, <i>bael</i> .	Gram, green, <i>mung</i> .
Black pepper, <i>marich, kala mircha</i> .	Gram meal, <i>besan</i> .
Camphor, <i>karpur</i> .	Hot spices, <i>garam masla</i> .
Capsicum, <i>lanka, lal mirchai</i> .	Jaggery, <i>gur</i> .
Cardamom-Candy, <i>elaich-dana</i> .	Lime, <i>lebu (sour)</i> .
Cardamom major, <i>bara elaich</i> .	Mango-ginger, <i>am-ada</i> .
Cardamom minor, <i>chhota elaich</i> .	Milk, condensed, <i>kheer</i> .
Caraway, <i>jowan</i> .	Milk, solid, <i>khoa</i> .
Cassia leaves, <i>tejpat</i> .	Milk, sour, <i>dahi</i> .
Cayenne, <i>lanka, lal mirchai</i> .	Mustard, <i>sarisha, sarson</i> .
Cereals, <i>dal</i> .	Otto, <i>atar</i> .
Cheese, <i>chhana</i> .	Parsley, <i>radhuni</i> .
Cinnamon, <i>dalchini</i> .	Pea, <i>sunti kalai</i> .
Cloves, <i>labang, long</i> .	Pea, cow, <i>barbati</i> .
Coconut, <i>narikel, nariel</i> .	Pea, green, <i>matar sunti</i> .
Coconut conserve, <i>narikel naru</i> .	Pepper, red, <i>lanka</i> .
Condiments, <i>masla</i> .	Pistachio, <i>pesta</i> .
Coriander seed, <i>dhania</i> .	Pumpkin, <i>sanchi kumra, kuddoo</i> .
Creamy Layer, <i>sar</i> .	Raisin, <i>kismis</i> .
Cumin seed, <i>jeera</i> .	Rice flour, <i>safeda</i> .
Curd, <i>dahi</i> .	Saffron, <i>jafran</i> .
Date-palm, <i>khejur</i> .	Sesamum, <i>til</i> .
Fennel, <i>jeera</i> .	Spices, <i>masla</i> .
Fenugreek, <i>methi</i> .	Sugar candy, <i>misri</i> .
	Sugar-foundants, <i>batasa</i> .
	Syrup, <i>ras</i> .
	Tamarind, <i>imli, tentul</i> .
	Turmeric, <i>holdi, hauld</i> .

# GENERAL INDEX

*The figures refer to page marks.*

PAGE.		PAGE.	
Abar Khabo	141	Chittaranjan Sandesh	141
Accessories	15	Chocolate Sandesh	143
Almond — Pistachio —		Colouring Agents	19
Saffron Sandesh	144	Condiments	19
Aloor Dum	58	Cooking, Methods of	29
Amrita Jilapi	104	Cream	34
Am Sandesh	138	Dahi	43
Ananda Laroo	82	Dahi Barha	76
Appliances	16	Dahi, making	44
Badam Takti	130	Dahi, qualities of	46
Bael	18, 49	Dahi, Sugared	46
Baeler Morabba	163	Dal Hulwa	74
Balusahi	94	Dalmut	68
Barfi	154	Dal Pooree	59
Barhas	76	Danadar	129
Batter	27	Darbesh	109
Batter, Consistency of	28	Delhi Durbar	115
Batter, Testing of	28	Dough, forming	24
Beating	27	Dudh-Suji	159
Bengal Pudding	164	Filling	28
Binding Agent	22	Firni	161
Besan	17	Flavouring Agents	18
Bonde	105	Flour, treatment of	23
Braying	27	Forming	24
Butter	34	Fruits	18
Cereals	26	Frying	30
Cham Cham	128	Gaja	90
Chandrapuli	79	Gaja, minor varieties	93
Chop Sandesh	142	Gaja, Mitha	91, 92
Chhana	37	Gaja, Nun	90
Chhana, properties of	39, 41	General Hints	52
Chhana, treatment of	41	Ghee	17, 34
Chhanabarha	128	Gheor	98
Chhanar Gaja	94	Ghol	47
Chhanar Jilapi	105	Golap Jam	116
Chhanar Fayesh	147	Gold leaf	21
Chhanar Murki	83	Grating	27

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Guja	153	Lebu Sandesh	138
Gur	51	Loochi	55
Gur in lieu of Sugar	133	Magadh Laroo	89
Gurer Sandesh	149	Malai	157
Hara-Gauri Sandesh	144	Malpoa	117
Hints	52	Malpoa, Chhana	119
Hot Spices	20	Malpoa Flour	118
Hulwa	72, 73	Malpoa, Kheer	120
Ice Cream Sandesh	148	Malpoa, Sujি	118
Ingredients, proportion of	53	Matichur	108
Ingredients, quality of	17	Mecha	88
Jaggery	51	Mewa	18
Jhuribhaja	69	Mewar Laroo	152
Jibe Gaja	93	Mihidana	107
Jilapi	101	Milk and its Products	33
Kachuri	62	Milk Preparations	9
Kachuri, Green peas	64	Mitha Barha	77
Kachuri, Kalai Pulse	62	Mithai	8, 10
Kalakand	153	Mohanbhog	72
Kalo-jam	128	Molasses	51
Kaminidana	140	Monda	8
Kamini Rice	17	Monmohan	145
Kamla Rasagolla	124	Monohara	139
Kanchagolla	144	Munger Barfi	100
Kanti	87	Munger Laroo	99
Katkate	83	Munger Mohanbhog	73
Khaja	95	Musk Sandesh	139
Khasa	17	Nalin Gur	51
Khasta Kachuri	64	Names, Hindi	8
Kheer	35	Nawabbhog	128
Kheer-Chhana Sandesh	146	Nikhuti	108
Kheer Kamla	160	Nimki	65
Kheer-Kadam	124	Nomenclature, Bengali	8
Kheermohan	125	Operations	23
Kheer Sandesh	153	Palo	160
Khoa	35	Palor Barfi	160
Kneading	24	Palta Bhaja	70
Kumra	162	Paira Gaja	93
Kumrar Mithai	162	Paltu	112
Laddoo	7	Pans	14
Ladies	14	Pantoah	113, 114
Lady Canning	115	Pantoah, Another Re-	
Lalmohan	129	cipe	114
Langcha	115	Papaw Mohanbhog	75
		Parota	57