

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

To Cook Egg Plant.

This vegetable is a delicious addition to every dinner, if it is only cooked rightly; but there is not much attention given to preparing it for an article of food in the United States, yet in India it is highly prized, and in very general use.

FRIED EGG PLANT.—Take a large, ripe, purple egg, and cut it in slices of half an inch in thickness; strew a little salt over each, and lay on a plate for ten minutes or more to let the water run out; then dip each slice into a well beaten egg, and then in cracker or bread crumbs, and fry in hot butter or lard as you would oysters, and the plant will taste like fried fish.

BOILED EGG PLANT.—Cut the eggs directly in half and boil as you would squash until perfectly soft and tender; then scrape from the inside of the skins, season with salt, butter, etc.; and strew sifted bread crumbs all over them. Set the dish into the oven to brown for ten minutes.

BAKED EGG PLANT.—Wash the vegetable clean, and bake in the oven as you would potatoes. Remove the skins while hot, mash to a paste, and season with butter, pepper and salt. A raw onion chopped fine and a small pepper, are considered great addition to this dish.

MAIDS AND MISTRESSES.—It should be plain enough that examples are as much to servants as to children; since in manners and social training servants are as children. The peasant-girl reared in an Irish cabin or German cottage can hardly be expected to be a model of politeness or of personal neatness. It is quite possible, however, to teach her by example alone. If the mistress be courteous to every member of her family, and they in turn to her, the maid soon feels the atmosphere of good-breeding, and unconsciously becomes amiable and respectful. But let the mistress speak sharply to her husband, or scold the children in public, or let the master constantly find fault in the presence of the servant, and she will shortly discover that courtesy is not one of the essentials of the establishment, and will, most likely, add black looks, and unenviable words to the general disharmony. Servants being imitative, there is more reason that the conduct of employers be worthy of imitation. If the mistress of a house be careful of her dress, her speech, her daily habits, her handmaid will, in all probability, grow more careful of her own. But the woman who comes to her breakfast-table with disheveled hair and rumpled gown, has no right to find fault with the maid for attending the door-bell in a dirty calico and slovenly shoes. Like mistress like maid, as well as like master like man. Unless a good example be set, there is no cause to complain of servants for following a bad one. As a rule, they are ready to learn, though they may be dull and slow of comprehension. They would rather improve their condition than degrade it. They would rather be ladies than servants. Their ignorance makes them mistake the false for the true, the bad for the good. If every mistress would take pains to set a fair example to her maids, and aid them now and then by timely and delicate hints, she would soon have servants who would be, in fact, the help they are in name.—Scribner.

PRESERVING PLUMS WITHOUT SKINS.—Pour boiling water over large egg or magnum bonum plums; cover them until it is cold, then pull off the skins. Make a syrup of a pound of sugar and a teaspoon of water for each pound of fruit; make it boiling hot and pour it over; let them remain for a day or two, then drain off and boil again; skim it clear and pour it hot over the plums; let them remain until the next day, then put them over the fire in the syrup; boil them very gently until clear; take them from the syrup with a skimmer into the pots or jars; boil the syrup until rich and thick; take off any scum which may arise, then let it cool and settle, and pour it over the plums. If brown sugar is used, which is quite as good, except for green gages, clarify it as directed.

HOW TO TEST THE RICHNESS OF MILK.—Procure any long glass vessel—a cologne bottle or long vial. Take a narrow strip of paper, just the length from the neck to the bottom of the vial, and mark it off with one hundred lines, at equal distances; or, if more convenient, and to obtain greater exactness, into fifty lines, and count each as two—and paste it upon the vial, so as to divide its length into a hundred equal parts. Fill it to the highest mark with milk fresh from the cow, and allow it to stand in a perpendicular position twenty-four hours. The number of spaces occupied by the cream will give you its exact percentage in the milk without any guess work.—Miss Agriculturist.

CANNING GRAPES.—It is not known to every one that the grape can be put up like other fruits for winter use. But try it and see. There is no fruit easier to manage this way, or that retains its natural flavor and excellence better. Make a syrup of a quarter of a pound of sugar for one pound of fruit; put the grapes whole into the scalding syrup and skim out soon, and let them partly cool, and then can them as you would any other fruit. If you wish to have the pulp clear of the seeds, you have only to run it through a colander. Nothing in the line of canned fruit makes a more healthy and palatable pie than the grape prepared in this way, or with less trouble.

ASPARAGUS.—Cut this when two inches high, run the knife under the ground three or four inches. Put it in cold water as you scrape it off. Put it in a bag for the purpose, and boil it hard twenty minutes, or longer if required. Put drawn butter over in a covered dish, and you have the nicest of all spring vegetables. If you want it to grow large, press a large mud bottle over the first shoot, and press dirt around it. It will grow to a larger size and be tender.

COOKING PEAS.—An English paper says: No vegetable depends more for its excellence upon cooking than peas. Have them freshly gathered and shelled, but never wash them. If they are not perfectly clean, roll them in a dry cloth; but this is seldom required, and then only through carelessness. Pour them into the dry cooking-dish and put as much salt over them as is required; then pour on boiling water enough to cover them; boil them fifteen minutes if they are young; no pea is fit to cook which requires more than half an hour's boiling. When done, put to a quart of peas three tablespoonfuls of butter and pepper to your taste. Put all the water to them in which they were boiled. The great mistake in cooking peas is in cooking too long, and in deluging them with water.

TO PICKLE SMALL CUCUMBERS AND GHERKINS.—Choose small, perfect gherkins, or cucumbers; spread on platters, mix a small bit of alum, pulverized, with salt, and cover them; let them lie in this a week. Then drain them, put them into a jar, cover them with boiling vinegar, and cover in thick with grape leaves. Set them near the fire. If they do not become tolerably green after an hour or so, pour the vinegar into another jar, set it on the hot range or hearth until too hot to bear your hand in it, but do not let it boil, then pour again over the pickles, cover with fresh leaves; repeat this until they are as green as you wish.

TOMATO PRESERVES.—Take the round yellow variety as soon as ripe, scald and peel them; then to seven pounds of tomatoes add seven pounds of white sugar, and let them stand over night. Take the tomatoes out of the sugar and boil the syrup, removing the scum. Put in the tomatoes and boil gently fifteen or twenty minutes; remove the fruit again, and boil until the syrup thickens. On cooling put the fruit into jars and pour the syrup over it, and add a few slices of lemon to each jar, and you will have something to please the most fastidious.

HOW TO COOK CORNED BEEF.—The Boston Journal of Chemistry says: The rule has a Hibernian sound. Don't boil it, for corned beef should never be boiled. It should only simmer, being placed on a part of the range or stove where this process may go on uninterruptedly from four to six hours, according to the size of the piece. If it is to be served cold, let the meat remain in the liquor until cold. Though meat can be made tender by letting it remain in the liquor until the next day, and then bring it to the boiling point just before serving.

WARMING COLD BOILED POTATOES.—Slice and put them in a basin with a little milk or water, some cream if you have it, and a little salt. Let it remain on the stove until it is thoroughly heated through, stirring often to prevent its sticking; a bit of fish left from a former meal or some beaten egg is a nice addition to it.

GOOD HEALTH.

Artificial Fibrin as a Diet.

Dr. John Goodman, in a communication to the British Medical Journal, says of artificial fibrin: "As a member of the British Medical Association, and in the common interests of humanity, I have much pleasure in calling attention to my discovery of this new dietetic substance. So far as I have employed it, it promises fair to be invaluable in medical practice, especially in cases of feeble alimentation and deficient nutrition, and second to none in those cases where rejection of food forms a prominent feature, or where the appetite and digestive powers are reduced to a minimum. As fibrinous material, it is of course highly nutritious, and eminently adapted to all cases where there is a deficiency of fibrin in the blood. It is, perhaps, unparalleled in its qualities of lightness and digestibility, and is, moreover, a great delicacy. In many urgent cases of rejection of food, etc., it not only remains where an egg otherwise cooked would not be tolerated, but its presence in the stomach has been found to create a feeling of want rather than of superfluity, and to promote rather than decrease the appetite for food.

The production of this substance is within the reach of every kitchen, and is effected with great facility. It is formed by exposing albuminous material to the operation or influence of cold water, for a given period; and on account of its great plenteousness we employ the ordinary hen's egg for its production. When the shell is broken and removed, and its contents are immersed in cold water for twelve hours or so, they are found to undergo a chemico-molecular change, and to become solid and insoluble. This change is indicated by the assumption, by the transparent white of the egg, of an opaque and snowy white appearance, which far surpasses that of an ordinary boiled egg. The product, and the fluid in which it is immersed, must now be submitted to the action of heat to the boiling point, when the fibrin will be ready for use.

The Titusville Herald says that asthma is of very rare occurrence in the oil regions, and that the cause of such exemption is found in the fact that the atmosphere there is thoroughly impregnated with the vapors of petroleum, which act almost as a specific for the relief of asthma, and at the same time as a preventive of consumption. It adds: "Let anyone who is afflicted with asthma, and feels a particularly difficult spell of breathing coming on, go in the vicinity of a producing well, where petroleum vapor hovers in the neighborhood, and he finds a great relief, and continued presence in such a neighborhood, will be the best means of a permanent cure."

CURE FOR SUMMER COMPLAINT.—Take about two tablespoonfuls of grated comfrey root and the white of one egg, beaten well together; then have ready a boiling pint of milk, into which stir the comfrey and egg. It will thicken like "pap," and it is not unpleasant to take.

NUTRITIVE PROPERTIES OF APPLES.—It is stated that by a careful analysis it has been found that apples contain a larger amount of phosphorus, or brain food, than any other fruit or vegetable, and on this account they are very important to sedentary men who work their brains rather than their muscles. They also contain the acids which are needed every day, especially for sedentary men, the action of whose liver is sluggish, to eliminate effete matters, which, if retained in the system, produce inaction of the brain, and indeed, of the whole system, causing jaundice, sleepiness, scurvy, and troublesome diseases of the skin.

FELON ON THE FINGER.—The following simple prescription is recommended as a cure for felon on the finger. Take common rock salt, such as is used for salting down beef or pork; dry it in an oven; then pound it fine; and mix it with spirits of turpentine in equal parts; put it in a rag and wrap it round the parts affected, and, as it gets dry, put on more, and in twenty-four hours you are cured—the felon will be dead. It will do no harm to try it.

CIDER AND RED PEPPER FOR MEASLES.—I have never seen it in print that cider will drive out the measles when they have struck in, and as I know it to be a good remedy I think it ought to be published.—B. in New England Farmer.

USEFUL INFORMATION.

Edible Starches.

An interesting paper on "The Edible Starches of Commerce; their Production and Consumption," was read a short time since by Mr. P. L. Simmonds at a meeting of the London Society of Arts. The lecturer pointed out that while the English use but one word to define all sorts of starch, even the minor classifications of arrowroots, sagos, tapiocas, corn-flours, &c., the French have two words by which they distinguish the starch obtained from roots, stems, fruit, seeds, etc., from the amylaceous product obtained from cereals: the former term fecula, and the latter they define as amidon or starch. The value of the edible starches imported into England, which was in 1860 296,438, in 1870 amounted to 366,570, and in 1871 to 485,706. The production of European starches was shown to be trifling as compared with that of tropical and sub-tropical countries, though considerable quantities are manufactured in this country from imported maize (or Indian corn) and rice, and sold under the name of corn-flour. The island of St. Vincent is the only arrowroot-producing colony that has kept steadily progressing, the quantity exported to the United Kingdom having increased from 11,436 cwt. in 1863, to 16,919 cwt. in 1870. In 1850 the shipments were only 3,573 barrels and 7,493 boxes. The other West Indian Islands, though at one time exporting considerable quantities of arrowroot, have gradually decreased their production, and the quantity exported has in every case but that of St. Vincent dwindled down to a merely nominal figure. In Brazil considerable attention is given to the production and manufacture of edible starches. A large and varied collection of these was shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, comprising starches made from pumpkins, maize, bread-fruit, white and yellow manioc, Brazil potato, Demerara potato yam, banana, etc. A variety of which feculas are mostly manufactured, the Maranta arundinacea was introduced into India about 1840, and is now cultivated to a considerable extent, the arrowroot made from it being extensively used in India, and some of it shipped to Europe. The consumption of sago in the United Kingdom is stated as 52,000 cwt. in 1850, 179,825 in 1860, and in 1870 the aggregate of sago and tapioca received from Singapore was 344,000 cwt., representing a money value of £283,541. The Australian colonies were also noticed by Mr. Simmonds as arrowroot producing countries, specimens of this starch manufactured in the colonies having been exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, and the London Exhibition of 1872. The Pacific islands appear to be very rich in the fecula producing arums and other plants, and a considerable trade is carried on in various feculas in many of the islands. Africa also shares to a considerable extent in the production of arrowroot, but Cape Colony and Natal are the only two districts that export it in any quantity. The Maranta arundinacea is the species cultivated, and it has also been introduced into the Mauritius, whence specimens of arrowroot were sent to the Paris Exhibition of 1867.

HOW TO HARDEN STEEL DRILLS.—It is not generally known that steel can be made so hard that it will pierce any known substance but a diamond. Many jewelers and lapidaries have great trouble in getting the points of their drills hard enough to pierce an amethyst. For the benefit of miners and others using drills that require a hard point, we recommend the following manner of manipulation. The drills should be held, if small, by hot pinchers or tongs, while tempering. First heat the tool to a white heat, and then press it into a stick of sealing-wax; leave it but a second there, and then stick it into the wax in another place. This operation is rapidly repeated until the graver is too cool to enter the wax. In turning or drilling, the tool is moistened with oil of turpentine.

WATERPROOF PAINT FOR CANVAS.—The following is a cheap and simple process for coating canvas for wagon tops, tents, awnings, etc. It renders it impermeable to moisture, without making it stiff and liable to break. Soft soap is to be dissolved in hot water, and a solution of sulphate of iron added. The sulphuric acid combines with the potash of the soap, and the oxide of iron is precipitated with the fatty acid as insoluble iron soap. This is washed and dried, and mixed with linseed oil. The addition of dissolved India rubber to the oil improves the paint.

A TEASPOONFUL of ammonia in one gallon of warm water will often restore the color of carpets, even if produced by acid or alkali. If a ceiling has been white-washed with carpet down, and a few drops are visible, this will remove it. Or, after the carpet is well beaten and brushed, scour with ox gall, which will not only extract grease but freshen the colors. A pint of gall in 3 gallons warm water will do a large carpet. Table and floor cloths may be thus washed. The suds left from a wash, when ammonia is used, even if almost cold, cleans these new floor-cloths well.

CAYENNE PEPPER FOR BUGS.—W. Lynn, a farmer of Monroe county, Ohio, has succeeded for many years in driving away cucumber and squash bugs from his vines by dusting common cayenne pepper upon them while wet with dew in the morning. He repeats the operation once a week, and finds five cents worth of pepper sufficient to keep his cucumber, melon and squash vines free during the season. He has recently tried it upon the new cabbage worm with success.

ARTIFICIAL INDIAN INK.—By mixing lampblack with ten times its weight of sulphuric acid (sp. gr. 66° Beaume) and allowing it to stand for some hours, and then washing out all the acid, the material acquires the power of mixing readily with water, and possesses all the properties of genuine Indian ink.

VARNISH FOR WHITE WOODS.—Dissolve three pounds of bleached shellac in one gallon of spirit of wine; strain, and add one and one-half more gallons of spirit. If the shellac is pure and white, this will make a beautifully clear covering for white wooden articles.

Speaking of that strange anomaly, the educated man of the period, who doubts the sphericity of the earth, and is ever and anon making his appearance in print, Iron says: There is to be for our enlightenment a "New Geographical Society," whose main object is to maintain that the earth is not a sphere, but a plane surface. In the prospectus, which with a few other documents has reached us, we are informed, as a grave scientific fact, that "indisputable facts can be shown along the margin of every ocean, lake, canal, or river in the world," but whether the new society is to be constituted of such "facts" is not stated. That eminent man of science, the Shah of Persia, is dragged in to serve the cause, and we are invited to share his astonishment (but when or where expressed we know not), "that a nation which makes such a display of her big ships and her maritime skill in general, does not yet know the surface of the ocean over which they sail; and that the English admirals for using their man-of-war for dredging for sea snails, instead of endeavoring to gain that information which even savage nations are possessed of." Mr. Hampden makes mention of a singular race of beings, whose "heads are filled with putty instead of brains," and more than insinuates that those who differ from him belong to this race. May we be permitted to ask if these putty-headed creatures were discovered after prolonged inspection by the "indisputable fact" who believes the world is not an oblate spheroid?

A GENIUS, writing to the Coal and Iron Record says: "I venture the prediction that before this century closes, locomotives will be driven exclusively by magnetic power, and ships by the use of the power contained in the ocean itself, without the use of fuel in either case. Will you make a note of this?" To which the Record responds as follows: "We cheerfully make a note of it, but chiefly for the purpose of protesting against any claims which may be based upon such crude ill-defined imaginings. Some men seem to think that the mere suggestion of a possibility confers on them a title to the name of inventor. Our literature is filled with fulsome allusions of poets, who, in their vague descriptions, have attempted to mention something out of the common way, though they had no idea in regard to the methods or the results of, which they wrote. How often has Tennyson's allusion to aerial flights been quoted as evidence of his far-seeing genius and power of invention? And yet the idea is not new, and the description as given by Tennyson has done nothing to clear the way for its accomplishment. So with the suggestions of our correspondent. Such prophecies have been made a thousand times in reference to these very things but thus far they have accomplished no good."

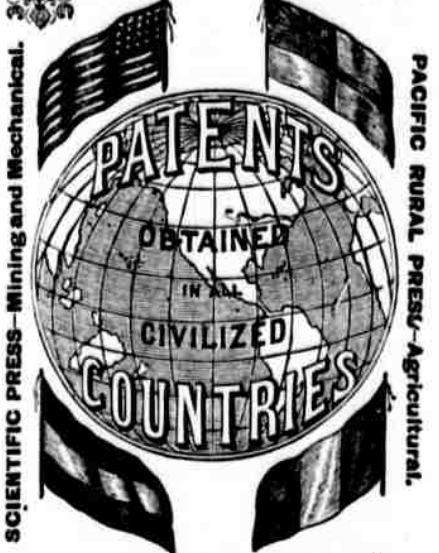
ELECTRICITY AND LIFE.—Recent studies have done considerable to determine what the action of electricity really is in the excitation of muscular irritability in dead bodies. The continuous current seems to act on muscular fiber after the manner of heat. If dead muscle be exposed to cold, the current restores contraction for a considerable period, but finally destroys it by inducing persistent contraction. If, on the other hand, the dead muscle is left at its normal temperature, the current merely shortens the period of irritability by quickening contraction. Experiments lately made with the L. E. den jar demonstrate that with sufficient current, small animals and birds can be made absolutely rigid for the moment in the position in which they stand; and so suddenly is the work done, so completely is the posture of life preserved, that nothing but actual examination with the hand can impress on the mind the fact that the creature has, with that sudden shock, passed from earth.

An Eastern newspaper has done a great service for the by no means small class of nervous people who are ill at ease in a thunder-storm, and who have an exaggerated fear of being struck by lightning. The Hartford Courant has been gathering statistics which show that the whole number of deaths in this country during the year 1870, from all causes, was about 600,000. Of these, lightning caused 202. When the percentage is so small any one who considers it cannot well be nervous. The sun is really more dangerous than lightning, for the number of deaths from sunstroke in 1870 was 397, yet few people are so excitable as to borrow trouble concerning sunstrokes. If the public could be thoroughly instructed in the laws of percentage, we should have fewer panics, and consequently less mortality in time of epidemics.

A BRIDGE ACROSS THE BOSPHORUS.—Signor Antonio Zimello, of Vicenza, the Italian engineer who some time since announced his project for a route by way of Trieste and Belgrade, or Brindisi and Valona, to Constantinople, and thence by the Euphrates Valley Railway to Bombay, has now devised a scheme for bridging the Bosphorus. He believes a bridge may be erected, resting on eighteen pillars at a height sufficient to allow vessels to sail under it. These pillars, being firmly united together, both by the bridge and by connecting stays 15 meters below the surface of the sea, will render the whole bridge, so to speak, a complete mass, the central pillars of which will be sustained by pontoons under the water.—Iron.

MATERIALS FROM WHICH PAPER IS MADE.—The materials of which paper is manufactured are vegetable substances containing fiber, and are not so limited in number or kinds as is commonly supposed. Linen and cotton rags, old paper, ropes, cotton waste, sweepings of flax mills, jute, surst, straw, linden and other woods, hemp and many other substances, offer a long catalogue of materials from which to choose that most suitable for making the particular description of paper wanted. Almost every day new names are added to the list; from the most unpromising and apparently worthless substances, it is found that some kind of paper can be made, provided the original material be fibrous.

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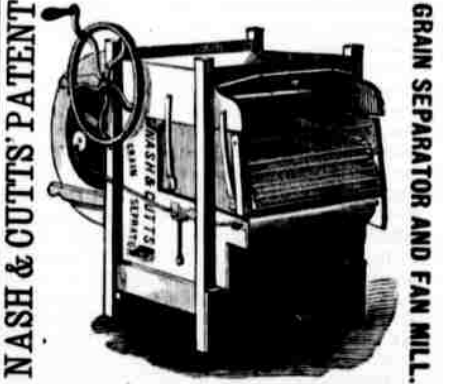
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