

PREPARATION OF HAMS OR BACON
FOR THE BRITISH MARKET.

It is somewhat remarkable that Canadian pork has been an article comparatively unknown in the British market until the present season, which may be accounted for in part from the careless manner in which it was cured: by that means it was thought only useful for sailors and convicts and for similar purposes, and was very seldom exhibited in the market for the use of the citizens.

Much credit is due to the Montreal Board of Trade for their judicious and seasonable remarks on the proper preparation of meat for the British market, which example we trust will be followed by other similar bodies.

In order that the Canadian farmers may reap the full advantage of the new trade which is about being opened to them for the article of meat, an entire revolution must take place in their mode of farming and feeding. We are aware that to effect this, that much time will be required, as but few of our farmers really understand their best interests, owing to their means of education being limited, and consequently an ardent desire for improvement is but little known or appreciated by the mass. Although the process of bringing about so desirable a change, may be attended with some little annoyance on our part, yet we do not feel daunted in making the attempt: and we feel satisfied that as soon as the British Government are apprised of the fact, that the Canadians are prepared to supply their market with salted provisions of a superior quality, that so soon will they admit the article on the same conditions that we receive their manufactured goods. In recommending modes for feeding and curing beef and pork, we trust we will be guided by the dictates of common sense, and that nothing will be recommended but what will be found profitably practical. In our last, we gave our opinions under the head of "*Berkshire Hogs*," respecting the best and most profitable breeds for the farmers to engraft on their native swine, and would beg to give a few hints in the present number about properly curing and drying hams and shoulders, which if acted upon will give an article equal to the best English hams.

Hams cut for the British market should be of an oval shape, and the shoulders may be made to imitate the hams as nearly as possible. They should be cured in the following manner:—To one hundred weight of meat, add one ounce of saltpetre, four ounces of brown sugar, and one peck of the best Liverpool salt, at three different applications; in ten or twelve days it will be sufficiently cured for hanging up. No rubbing is required as some foolishly suppose; the only necessary precautions to be used are cleanliness, security from frost, close attention to the packing of one piece snugly upon another, and the application of the due proportion of each of the ingredients as above specified. Many prefer salting their hams in casks, but the plan we prefer is to salt them on a few planks, raised a little from the ground floor of a dry and wholesome cellar, which gives the blood and that portion of the salt which is not required for the purpose of curing the meat, an opportunity to escape. If salted in tubs and attended to, and taken out of the brine at the time mentioned, the difference in the two plans will be very slight. We recommend that the old plan of allowing hams and shoulders to lay in the brine for eight or ten weeks should be abandoned, which of itself is

enough to destroy all the flavour or juices that ever were in the meat.

We have seen large quantities of pork, including whole sides, cured as above recommended, which is a *fac simile* of the English mode: and if we are to be customers of theirs we must prepare our article to suit their taste. It is not unusual to see in that country, in some of the large bacon curing establishments, thirty or forty tons piled on the floors undergoing the curing process. In applying the curing ingredients as we have cursorily described, the meat is laid up into lots or piles, and when each of the application of the same is used, the one heap takes the place of the other, and the upper pieces are laid on the floor and *visa versa*, and so on until the whole be ready for hanging up.

It is considered a difficult matter to keep dried hams or bacon from becoming rancid or rusted during the summer months. Various modes have been practiced to prevent this difficulty with considerable success, such as packing in layers of fresh charcoal, and wood ashes, and others prefer whitewashing with newly slacked lime; but the plan we suggest as worthy of a trial, will prevent the rust and will keep the meat as fresh and as clean as when taken down from the hooks.

Hogs slaughtered in the months of October and November may be cured in the style already mentioned, and then be hung up in the upper apartment of a building which will admit of a free ventilation of pure air, which is the only necessary element to dry meat. In our humble opinion the drying of bacon over kitchen fires or warm rooms, is the principal cause of rust.

Hams and shoulders for exportation should be inclosed in sacks, made of cheap factory cotton or linen, which should be coated with a composition of lime, ashes, rock or Liverpool salt, which will keep insects of every description from injuring them.

If any of our readers have their doubts as to the efficacy of our plan, we trust at least they will give it a trial on a small scale, and we will go bail for the results, if the whole plan be honestly followed out; and if any feel competent to recommend a plan more likely to please their customers, and be at the same time fraught with greater advantages to the colonist, we hope they will not fail in forwarding us such for the benefit of the readers of this journal and the Province at large.

GRAND PROVINCIAL SHOW.

In a former number of this journal we promised our readers that we would give our views relative to the contemplated Grand Show of Cattle and Farming Implements, that has been spoken of as a means of giving an additional stimulus to the breeders of stock in this Province, but to do justice to the subject and the spirited gentlemen who have recommended it, we fear we would make the columns of THE CULTIVATOR offensive to some of the would be great men that take the most prominent part in managing the County and District Cattle Shows, and would therefore for the present beg to withhold them. We have, notwithstanding, five District Agricultural Societies in our "mind's eye," that are officered by the right kind of men that would take an interest in infusing a "go a-head" spirit of rivalry among the farmers of their respective districts; and if we should ever have the pleasure of witnessing the grand performance, we an-

ticipate greater things from those five districts than all the remainder of the Province beside.

As a specimen of the spirit manifested by one of the above societies, we give below an extract from a letter which we received only a few days since from their very zealous and enterprising Secretary, who, by the way, is a practical homespun farmer. In speaking of the support which should be given in aid of our feeble exertions, in removing the cloud of darkness from this our native land. He says:—"I have the satisfaction to state that our Society appear willing to patronize your efforts to the extent of their ability, not only by sending your paper *gratis* to all subscribers of ten shillings or upwards, but also have passed resolutions to oblige their committees, who have been or may be appointed to execute any trust for the society, to report the same in writing and communicate freely and fully all useful information connected with the duties assigned them, and that official and other members would be expected to communicate to you for publication, in their own simple way, whatever they might think would be of an advantage to themselves and their brother farmers to practice. In order to brighten up their memories on the subject, the society recommend the formation or organization of Farmers' Clubs or Societies on a small scale, in different neighbourhoods throughout the district, the objects of which will be to discuss matters and things connected with practical farming."

If this kind of spirit were promulgated by similar societies throughout the Province, Canada would then be in a fair way of earning the high and glorious appellation of "an English County."

We assure the esteemed friend from whom we have borrowed, for public use, unauthorizedly the above extract, that nothing would give us greater pleasure than to further the interests of the Farming Clubs which are about being organized in his district, and any doubtful questions that may arise in any of their discussions, we would be happy to give our opinion. As for the plain simple style spoken of, we would say the plainer, the better, if the communications contain practical facts that would prove useful and instructive to the mass of our readers.

We strenuously advise the organization of similar Clubs throughout the whole Province, and we flatter ourselves that the benefits derived will be of an incalculable value to every person who interests himself in the matter. A series of questions will be proposed by us from time to time, which will open a field for useful discussion for such Clubs.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—A communication from Belleville has been received, signed "A Reader," and another from Hamilton over the signature of "A Free Trader," which will receive due attention in the April number.

The articles promised in our last, on "Wheat Culture or Preventive of Rust," have been unavoidably crowded out of the present number.

The Wood Engraver has been absent from town for some time past, which accounts for the absence of engravings, he has, however, returned, and our journal will be in future illustrated with useful engravings.