

Scientific and Useful.

PRESERVING CUT FLOWERS.

In a letter to the French Society of Horticulture a chemist, M. Fremont, mentions that a good way of preserving cut flowers in a state of freshness is to dissolve sal-ammoniac, or cytarohydrate of ammonia with the water in which the stems are put, in the proportion of five grammes per litre of water. They will thus often be kept fresh for a fortnight. The experiment is one which can be easily made.

BEHAVING UP A SETTING HEN.

A friend of ours told me, the other day, how his wife cured hens of setting; and as it is a very novel way, we will repeat it for the benefit of others who are bothered with inveterate old setters. This lady had a hen that was bound to set; the lady was bound she should not. She would shut up the old hen one day, and when released back she would go to her setting. Patience finally gave out. Picking up some splinters from the chip-yard (some four or five inches long) she bound them firmly to the hen's legs, leaving only the hip joints in working order. Biddie was outwitted: like the Dutchman's hen she would have to set standing up.

SPONGE ROLL.

Two eggs—whites and yolks beaten separately—two cups of flour, one of sugar, finely powdered; one half teacup sour cream, mix; then add one small half teaspoonful of soda dissolved in warm water. Bake in square iron or tin pans (the smaller bako pans belonging to a stove are more suitable), with the heat applied principally to the bottom. When done, loosen the cake, but do not remove it from the pan. Then spread on jam, marmalade, jelly, or anything of the kind. Begin at one end and roll the whole cake as tightly as possible, and transfer it to the plate. Eaten cold with hot sauce it makes a rich and excellent desert.

THE FOOT OF A HORSE.

The human hand has often been taken to illustrate Divine wisdom and very well. But have you ever examined your horse's foot? It is hardly less curious in its way. Its parts are somewhat more complicated, yet their design is simple and obvious. The hoof is not, as it appears to the careless eye, a mere lump of insensible bone, fastened to the leg by a joint. It is made up of a series of thin layers, or leaves of horn, about five hundred in number, and nicely fitted to each other, and forming a lining to the foot itself. Then there are as many more layers, belonging to what is called the "cotton bone," and fitted into this. These are elastic. Take a quire of paper and insert the leaves one by one into those of another quire, and you will get some idea of the arrangement of the several layers. For the weight of the horse rests on as many elastic springs as there are layers in his four feet, about four thousand, and all this is contrived, not only for the convenience of his own body, but for whatever burdens may be laid on him.

VIPERS SWALLOWING THEIR YOUNG.

That alligators swallow their young, I have an ocular demonstration in a single case, and have the universal tradition of negroes and whites in this region of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, that such is their habit. In the Winter of 1843-4, I was engaged making a survey on the Homochitto. Lake, near the Mississippi river, South-west front of that State. The day was warm and sunny, and as I halted near the margin of a pond nearly dried up, to pick up some shells, I started a litter of young alligators, that scampered off yelping like puppies, and retreating some twenty yards to the bank of the Lake Homochitto. I saw them reach their refuge in the mouth of a five-foot alligator. She evidently held open her mouth to receive them, as, in single file, they passed in beyond my observation. The dam then turned slowly round and slid down beneath the water, passing into a large opening in the bank, beneath the root of an ash-tree. The water was rendered turbid here and nowhere else, enabling me to find the mouth of what was, probably, the place of hybernation. I made a communication of these facts to Sir Charles Lyell, who visited me shortly afterwards. Some notice was made of it, and I think the statement will be found in the volume of his Second Visit to the United States. Doubtless, this refuge is temporary and the young are released at their own or the mother's pleasure; the descent being but partial, in no way reaching or interfering with the process of digestion. I have found the stomach of an alligator, killed during winter, when nearly torpid, almost empty and clean, excepting the two or three pieces of wood—eypress, if I correctly remember—rounded off, as if by attrition or lateral friction, of three, six, and ten cubic inches. These are common, and taken in, doubtless, for slow digestion during hybernation.—Science Gossip.

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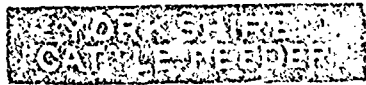
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