

night will do. Cut in dice and serve on lettuce leaves, with a spoonful of mayonnaise dressing.

Salad Dressing.—A very easy one. Put in a saucepan 2 eggs, well beaten, with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful mustard, a little salt, pepper, and about a teaspoonful of sugar. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar, and butter half the size of an egg. Set on stove, and stir gently until the mixture thickens somewhat. When cold, add 2 table-spoonfuls of thick cream.

Chicken Salad.—Take the meat of the cooked chicken all off the bones. Chop it fine, and add to it chopped celery, if it can be procured. If not, a few walnuts chopped fine may be added; some like a slice of minced onion also. Season well, and serve on lettuce, with the dressing poured over.

Now, then, I have taken up all the space this time over this wedding, but I thought that "Earnest Reader" would not want to be put off with a few words. I hope some of these hints may prove useful.

Delightful letters from A Country Friend, An Orphan, Annie Laurie, New Ontario Boy, Aunt Agnes, and others, still await publication, and will be given a place soon; also some recipes from M. E. Graham and Blacklocks.

I am sure all the Ingle Nookers will join with me in wishing "Earnest Reader" a whole big heap of happiness, and a charming wedding. Just one word more, "Earnest Reader"—I think you should impress a number of young men into service for the day to help in waiting on the tables. This is quite customary now, and simplifies matters for all concerned.

DAME DURDEN.
"Farmer's Advocate" office, London, Ont.

Domestic Economy.

The white of an egg with a little water and sugar, is good for children who are troubled with an irritable stomach. It is very healing, and will prove an excellent remedy for diarrhoea, as well as a simple preventive for bowel disorders.

NERVOUS CHILDREN.

Never scold or make fun of nervous children. They suffer enough without your threats or sarcasm. Don't let them know you see their awkwardness when in company, nor their grimaces when alone.

A case was reported of a boy ten years old, who, on being vexed, and often without provocation, will clench his hands and make the most frightful contortions of the muscles of his face and head, until his poor mother fears that he is idiotic. By no means. He is the brightest boy in his class at school, fond of reading and of natural history, but he is of a highly nervous temperament, and has not been taught to control the little wires, so to speak, on which he is strung.

This is no single case. There are thousands of children who give way to their nerves in similar fashion. Never whip them, but talk to them about those curious little strings that should be made their servants, and not their masters.

A prominent physician says the man or woman who whips a nervous child should for every blow given receive five, and is on a level with brutes that have no reason. It is our duty to encourage and help them. Be patient with them. They are the making of our future successful men and women, for they will work hard at whatever they undertake. Brace up your own nerves first, and then be indulgent towards the capers of your over-nervous children.

The Country Home.

It's there I wad hae oor bairns leeve, guidman,
And grow pure in God's sweet caller air;
The toon may teach sin, it's met on ilk' han';
But the fields aye preach purity fair.

—A. S. Alexander.



Ferns.

A correspondent has written asking for some instructions regarding the culture of ferns. In the first place, all ferns do not grow well in the house; some of them require a more humid atmosphere than can be obtained anywhere indoors, except in greenhouses especially arranged for the purpose. The Boston, Pierson, Holly, and Silver ferns, however, are all desirable for house-culture. In potting them, see to it, above all things, that the drainage is good. Fill the pots to one-fourth of their depth with bits of charcoal, over which spread a layer of moss to keep the soil up. The soil should be a light, spongy, black muck; but when this cannot be obtained, ordinary soil mixed with some leaf mould and coarse sand may be used, or the soil scratched from about the roots of grass. Let the ferns have plenty of light, but do not expose them to much hot sunshine. Do not fertilize with manure of any kind. If green plant lice get on them, spray with sulpho-tobacco soap solution, or with weak tobacco tea; if scale or mealy-bug, wash with soapy water and brush the stems well. During the winter give your ferns a partial rest, by setting them in a cool, dark place, and giving them very little water for a while.

Many of the wild ferns grow finely in the house, or in corners of the garden or veranda. In planting these, first attend to the drainage, then give the plants, as far as possible, the exact conditions under which you found them growing. If your fern is a big osmunda, found growing in marshy ground where the soil is very wet, procure your soil from there if possible, place in pots with holes in the bottom and pot as above; then give plenty of water. If, on the other hand, your fern is a delicate wood-fern, plant in bush soil, and give less water; and so it goes, study the habitat, then plant accordingly.

Before leaving this subject of ferns, I cannot resist the temptation to give you a few of the legends which have clung about the history of these beautiful plants, and which I have obtained from Willard S. Clute's excellent book on "Ferns in their Haunts." Little wonder is it, perhaps, that mystery should have clung about ferns, and that quaint stories in regard to them should have become imbedded in folk-lore, even as the great old ferns of ancient times embedded themselves in warp and woof of the coal-measures. Naturally enough, the first of these legends attempts to account for the fern's lack of flowers. Until the Nativity, it was said, they did bear them; but when all the other flowering plants mixed with the straw in the manger burst into bloom in honor of the event, the fern failed to do so, hence was condemned for all time to be flowerless. In the 17th century men were still wrestling with the problem, and by that time had reached a different conclusion. It was then stated that ferns produced flowers, but only on St. John's Eve. At dusk upon that day the "bracken" was supposed to put forth very tiny blue flowers, which, by midnight, developed and ripened into flame-colored seed. To him who should be so fortunate as to secure some of this "mystic fern seed," was thenceforth given the power of becoming invisible at will. So firmly was this superstition believed in that we find it was deemed necessary for a French Synod to pronounce a severe penalty upon all who should search for fern seed on St. John's Eve. About the same period it was firmly believed that the horse which trod

upon fern leaves would immediately lose its shoes, and so, doubtlessly, many a missing shoe was accounted for. The wearing of a bit of bracken was also supposed to protect one from witches, because, upon cutting the stalk transversely, a marking resembling a C, the initial of Christ, could be seen. Good Jacobites, however, at a later date, chose to see in the same marking an outline of the oak in which "Bonnie Prince Charlie" hid when the soldiers were looking for him. . . . Ferns were also put to practical uses in the olden time. Houses were thatched with them, the young crosiers or "fiddle-heads" of various species were cooked and eaten as greens, and at times, when wheat was scarce, the roots were crushed and mixed with flour to make bread.

But space will not permit the telling of more. At some future time we shall be glad to tell something of various Canadian species, and of the manner in which these flowerless plants propagate their species.

FLORA FERNLEAF.

"Farmer's Advocate" office, London, Ont.

The Top Price for a Cow.

General Russell A. Alger, former Secretary of War, U. S., is said to have paid the record price for a cow—and that a dead one. Fifty odd years ago he was an orphan in Richfield, Ohio, without a cent, and with but one suit of clothes. He wanted to attend school, and went to a doctor who lived in a neighboring village to ask for a chance to work for his board. The doctor did not need the services of a boy, but was so much impressed by young Alger's earnestness that he took him into his family and sent him to school. He did no work except to care for the doctor's horse and cow. The years sped on, and Russell A. Alger became a millionaire, while his benefactor was reduced to straightened circumstances. One by one the doctor's children died, and he and his aged wife were left alone. But the old man kept his pride, and when General Alger assisted him he was forced to do so in roundabout ways. A dozen years ago the General paid the doctor a visit, determining to aid him.

"Why, Alger, you don't owe me anything," said the old man, "and I won't take anything."

"But I owe my education to you," "Bosh! You owe that to yourself."

"But I caused you trouble and expense, for which I want to repay you."

"The trouble need not trouble you, and there wasn't any expense worth talking about. In fact, the only expense that you caused me, so far as I can remember, was the loss of a cow. Do you know, Alger, that when you came to live with me, I had the best cow in these parts, and that your awkwardness completely spoiled her? Within three weeks you had made her so skittish that no one could go near her, and I had to sell her for beef."

"Then I owe you for that cow. I am going to pay you for her, and to add a little interest for the use of the money for about forty years."

After long argument the old man reluctantly consented to receive pay for his cow, and the cheque that General Alger drew to his order kept him in comfort for the remainder of his life.



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