

Happy Days

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NUTMEGS.

The picture here presented explains itself, and shows the way in which we get one of our staple spices, the nutmeg.

The nutmeg is the kernel of the fruit of a tree which grows in most tropical climates. The tree averages twenty-five feet in height. The fruit is oblong, roundish and pear-shaped, and is golden yellow in colour when ripe. At the top of our picture we see how they are gathered. When the trees are shaken, the ripe fruit falls to the ground and is gathered by women. The fleshy part is of a peculiar consistency, resembling candied fruit, and is often preserved and eaten as sweetmeats; this is removed, leaving a thin, brown shell, slightly grooved by the pressure of the mace. Within this shell is the nutmeg. At the lower left hand corner we see them removing the shell, at the upper right hand corner. Making the nuts, at the right side, packing them to sea, and also where they are being hauled away after reaching our ports. At the lower right hand corner, we



NUTMEGS.

see them being sold, and at the bottom, after all this handling, packing and trouble, they have reached the kitchen, where an *owl* will be put to any more journeying.

Most of our nutmegs come from the West India Islands, Jamaica, Trinidad and Brazil. Great Britain, however, furnishes the greater portion of the spice used in her own settlements. The nut is very liable to the attack of a beetle which is very destructive, and it is common to give them a coating of lime. This accounts for the white, dusty substance often seen on them.

Who ever thinks when he sees a lot of nutmegs, of where they have been, of the waters they have crossed, of the hands that have prepared them, of the eyes that have seen them, and of the amount of labour necessary to obtain them? And though they are not an absolute necessity, we fear if the supply were cut off at once the loss of them would be very much felt.—
FRED.

KEEP little annoyances out of the way.