

HOW TO COOK RHUBARB.—It is a common error in cooking rhubarb to peel it. This should never be done as the skin contains the aroma of the plant, and is not at all fibrous but cooks as readily and becomes pulpy. We have derived this information from a French cook of note, experience and skill. The same cook tells us that asparagus should be cut into pieces about three quarters of an inch long before cooking. It should be boiled with a nice piece of salt pork and served up in the same manner as peas.

A REMEDY FOR THE BARK LOUSE.—A certain remedy for the bark louse, is using the common sal soda, which may be had at any druggist's for 3 cents per lb. Dissolve it in water, allowing one pound of sal soda to each gallon of water. When well dissolved, apply it with an old whitewash brush to the limbs and trunk of the tree. It destroys all insects which harbor under the loose bark, and effectually kills the bark louse. I use it in spring and autumn when the trees are not in leaf, and its effects are astonishing in giving new vitality to the trees.

THE NEW GEM.—Two celebrated Chemists, Messrs. Wholer and Deville, have discovered a process by which *Boron* may be crystalized, forming gems equal in hardness and refractive power to the diamond, and of various colours. *Boron*, the base of the common *borax* of commerce, was discovered by Sir H. Davy in 1807, who separated it by the galvanic battery, as a dark olive coloured substance, without taste or smell, and like *Silicon* a non conductor of electricity. Its characteristics placed it midway between *Carbon* and *Silicon*, with the distinction, that it was long supposed to be uncrystallisable. Later investigations have, however, removed this disagreement, and the three substances are now found to assimilate to character. Crystallised *Boron* may truly be called the *diamond of Boron*, as is the true diamond that of *Carbon*. It is obtained in the form of transparent crystals, varying in colour from a yellow to a red, but this colour appears to have been accidental and due to impurities in the material operated on. It is believed that greater care in purification will lead to the production of colourless crystals. Crystallised *Boron* possesses a lustre and refractive power, which exceed those of all other substances as the diamond. It is presumed that, when colourless crystals shall be obtained, they will present exactly the appearance of diamonds, in respect of their refractive and reflective powers. They are equal in hardness, scratching the corundum, or oriental ruby: and applied in powder, polishing the surface of the hardest gems. The laboratory of the chemist will henceforth furnish gems equal to those formed by nature, either for use in the arts or for articles of decoration. So perfect are the *Boron* gems, that nothing short of their destruction by chemical means will enable the best judges to distinguish them from those they simulate. And the probability is, that this discovery will greatly affect the value of precious stones. The ease with which the colour of the product is affected by accidental impurity, will enable the manufacturers to make stones of any desired tint. The discoverers have presented specimens to the French Academy of Sciences.

SEX OF EGGS.—The round plump eggs will hatch hens, and slender ones cocks, invariably. So says an exchange.

NEW GUANO.—Letter from the English Consul at Puerto Rico, to Lord Clarendon:

“Puerto Rico, Feb. 16, 1857.

“My Lord,—In the Island of Mona, situated about fifty miles nearly due west of the town of Mayaguez, at the western extremity of the Island of Puerto Rico, some deposits of guano have been discovered, and according to the report of the surveyors appointed by this government to inspect the deposits, a copy of which I have obtained, the guano is situated in three caves, and the quantity is said to amount to 23,525 tons. I regret that I am unable to state the proportion per cent. of ammonia contained in this guano, as I have not yet succeeded in procuring a sample, nor have any steps been taken by the government to ascertain this fact, upon which the value of the discovery depends, the samples brought by the surveyors having been forwarded to Madrid. A tolerably correct estimate of its properties, however, may be formed from the circumstance that a cargo taken by the master of a merchant vessel, under the flag of the United States, who was the discoverer of these deposits, realised at New York the sum of twenty dollars, or £4 2s. sterling, per ton. The governor of Puerto Rico is awaiting instructions from the authorities at Madrid as to the manner in which he is to dispose of the guano which in the meanwhile has been protected against further depredations. I have, &c.

(Signed) “LENNOX HUNT.”