THE PARIS EXHIBITION.—A SKETCH IN THE PARK.

Our engraving, which represents a portion of the park at the Paris Exhibition grounds, needs little mention beyond that it is one of those delightful retreats so refreshing to the weary visitor, who, tired out with tramping about the buildings and grounds, is only too pleased to refresh his eyes with some of that exquisite miniature water scenery which is scattered about the grounds. We take our illustration from the London *Graphic*.

The Natural History of the Eel.

According to the reports of shad fishermen, the chief enemy of the shad is the eel, which not only follows that fish up the streams and devours the spawn, but often attacks the shad after they are caught in the nets. Entering the shad at the gill openings the eels suck out the spawn and entrails, and leave the fish perfectly clean. The finest and fattest shad are the ones selected. It is a curious circumstance that of a fish so well known as the eel so many of its life habits should be in dispute. An animated discussion has been going on in Germany quite recently with regard to the natural history of this fish, and in a late number of a scientific journal the following points are set down as pretty well substantiated. Though a fresh water fish which passes the greater part of its life in rivers, the eel spawns in the sea. That it is viviparous is extremely improbable. The eel found in the upper waters of rivers is almost always female. At the age of four years it goes down to the sea to spawn and never returns to fresh water. The spawning process is somehow dangerous to the eel, thousands being found dead near the mouths of rivers, with their ovaries empty. The descent of the fish to the sea does not appear to take place at any definite period, but is probably dependent on the season for spawning. The male is always much smaller than the female, and never exceeds half a yard in length. The males never ascend to the head waters of rivers, but keep continually in the sea or in the lower reaches of the river. Nothing is definitely known about the spawning season, though it is probable that the eggs are deposited in the sea not far from the mouths of rivers.

ICES AND ICE CREAMS.

What are termed ices consist simply of the juices of fruits sweetened with sugar sirup and then frozen, like ice cream. It is stated that the best ices are made by first cooking the sugar into the form of a sirup, having a strength of 30°. The fruit juices are strained through a sieve and then added, with a little water and the whites of a few eggs, to the prepared sirup. The final mixture should have a consistence of 22°. It is then frozen in the usual way.

To make the best ice cream it is necessary that the cream should be of the best quality; and the utensils in which it is made must be absolutely clean.

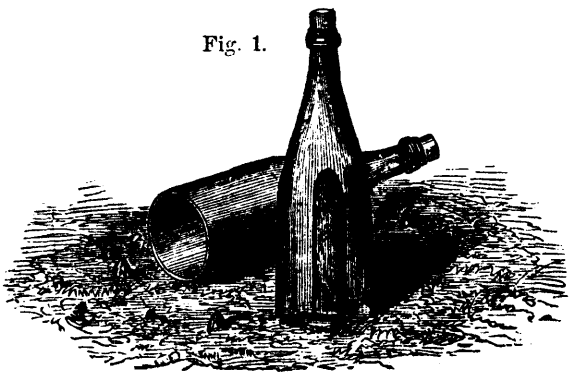
With every quart of the cream mix six ounces best pulverized white sugar, a very little vanilla bean, and the white of one egg. The latter imparts a smoothness and delicacy to the cream that cannot otherwise be obtained. The prepared mixture is then to be stirred in the freezer until it is entirely congealed.

Those who desire first rate ices or cream should follow these directions carefully, and avoid the use of corn starch or other thickeners. Instead of vanilla as a flavor for the cream, a trifling amount of any desired flavoring sirup or juice may be used, as strawberry, pineapple, orange, lemon, etc.

ASPARAGUS IN WINTER.

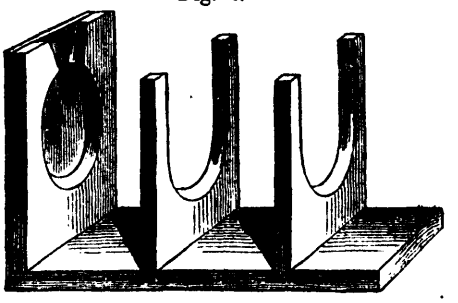
There is probably no vegetable that repays the trouble of artificial cultivation better than asparagus. It grows rapidly and attains great size when properly cared for; and it may be made a source of great profit, large quantities of it being grown under glass in France, and sold in winter at high prices. M. Jacquisson, of Chalons, France, a well known horticulturist, has introduced a plan of forcing asparagus, so simple that our engraving (Fig. 1) is sufficient to explain it. He uses an ordinary wine bottle with the bottom cut off. These bottomless bottles, when well corked, are placed over the asparagus head just as it is beginning to rise above the ground.

Fig. 1.



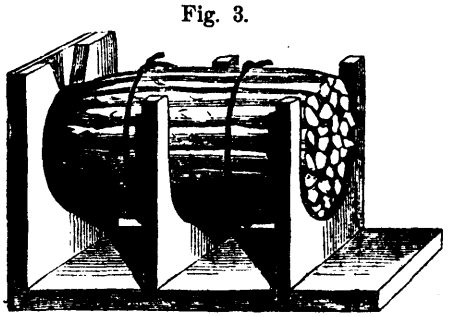
Numerous simple devices for holding the heads of asparagus while they are being tied in bunches are in use; and they are useful to the gardener, as carefully put up bunches are far more salable than irregular bundles of unevenly arranged heads. Fig. 2 shows an implement of this kind,

Fig. 2.



called the Sartrouville buncher. When filled, the tips of the heads are brought close together, the diameter of the space for the tips being less than that of the other openings in the

Fig. 3.



upright boards. When the frame is nearly full, the shoots are passed in through the wedge-shaped opening shown. Fig. 3 shows the same buncher when filled.