From the Albany Cultivator.

Winter Butter.

There is scarcely one operation of the dairy more important to the farmer, than the manufacture of good butter; and in the winter time, experienced dairy-women are frequently disappointed in their endeavors to procure it.

The plan now used in my family with perfect and invariable success, was adopted from seeing its practical operation in the winter of 1825, in the family of Dr. Jones, of Halifax county, Virginia. Mr. Fessenden published an account of it in the first edition of his "Complete Farmer," in 1831; and having seen many plans recommended in agricultural journals during the present winter for making good butter, of rather an equivocal character to my mind, I feel persuaded that the method now in use by my family would prove a great saving in labor and cream, wherever adopted.

The process is simply this: As soon as your milk is brought in, strain it into tin pans or pails, of a suitable size, and set them upon hot coals, or when convenient, upon a cooking stove, and allow the milk to heat gradually until the temperature is nearly up to boiling heat—from 130° to 150° Fahrenheit will answer. Then set them away and allow them to stand forty-eight hours. By this time the cream will rise in a thick leathery coat, and in quantity and quality that will surprise any one who has never before made the experiment. Take it off and churn it by stirring with a wooden paddle, which is our method, or in any other convenient manner, and the butter will be produced immediately, and of the finest quality and flavor. The cream is perfectly separated from the milk by this method,—perfectly sweet, and there is never any disappointment in the speedy manufacture of the very finest quality of butter; and it gives more butter from the same milk than we have ever been able to obtain in any other way.

Cream may be rendered oily by heating, and the butter entirely spoilt in flavor by heat, at a much lower temperature than I have suggested; but new milk will bear heat to any degree short of boiling, without the least injury to the cream which subsequently rises.

It has made my heart ache to see an industrious woman stand three or four hours over a churn, to be rewarded in the end, perhaps, by an indifferent turn-out of ill-looking butter of a doubtful flavor, and I trust I may be excused for urging the trial of this method upon every one who may not already become familiar with it. The quantity and quality of the butter will be increased, and the labor of producing it most essentially diminished.

Respectfully your friend,

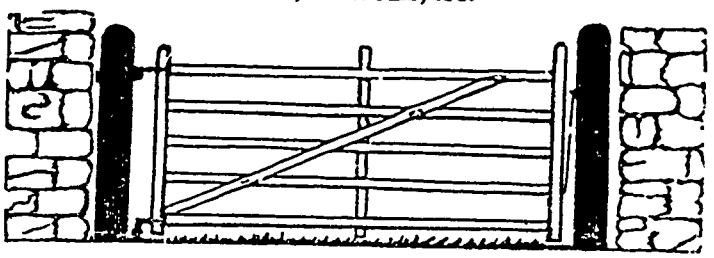
WILLIAM S. WAIT.

N. B. For the convenience of heating milk in vessels adapted to that purpose, it may be well to state the fact for the benefit of those who may not already be acquainted with it, that all the cream will rise from milk as speedily and effectually when set away in a deep pan or pail, as in a shallow vessel,—and the process of skimming rendered more easy and convenient.

Grenville, Ill. Feb. 3, 1841.

Stoves, for heating rooms, will throw out much more heat for the amount of fuel consumed, if, as soon as the wood gets well burning, the draught below and above the fire, is closed. Far less heat is swept by the draft up chimney. On this principle, the blacksmith increases the heat of his forge, by sprinkling water upon the ignited coals, and preventing the flame from rushing out; and also, green wood on a common fire often prevents the rapid escape of heat up the chimney, for a similar reason. All stoves should therefore be provided with a valve above as well as below the fire.

GATES, FENCES, &c.



It is an old adage that "a man is known by the company he keeps." So the provident farmer is known by his gates, fences and outbuildings; to find them in good order and repair is evidence of thrift, and gives character and a favorable opinion of the proprietor.

"Show me," said a valued friend, "good fences, gates and out-buildings—fields free from brush, briars and weeds, and I will show you a good farmer."

To illustrate this, I will relate a circumstance that occurred while myself and son were riding through the east part of Saratoga about one year ago. It was in a section of the country new to both of us; of course the inhabitants were all strangers. After passing several farms which had the appearance of being pretty well managed, and *many* which appeared the very reverse, we came to one which attracted my attention, and I said to my son, "This man *takes* and *reads* an agricultural paper." "Why do you think so?" said he. I pointed to his fences and gates for an answer, and as we approached his dwelling other evidences were so apparent that I proposed to make him a call. Unfortunately for us he was absent, but we found one of his men who was kind enough to show us the stock and improvements, all of which strongly confirmed my first impression.

In his yard we found a fine Durham bull, for the improvement of his cattle; and his pigs were a cross of the Mocho and Berkshire breed. His piggery was on a new plan intended for the double purpose of fattening his swine and cattle. It was in the basement of his gram barn, near a cellar in which he stored his roots. The basement also contained his horse power, with which he thrashed his grain, and ground his apples and vegetables for his stock. Near to this he had two cauldrons set in arches, in a house where the food was cooked for his hogs.

His pens were about 4 foot wide and 10 ft. long. In each pen from two to four hogs are fattened in the fall, and when slaughtered, their places were supplied by bullocks, each pen forming a very comfortable stall for one animal. In addition to the usual fixtures for swine, he had racks erected for hay, and the troughs answered for mangers in which grain or roots could be fed to cattle.

Every step we took only increased our regret at the absence of the proprietor, from whom we were confident we could receive much information.

We were informed, by his man, that he was attending an auction about four miles distant on our road home. I was determined, if possible, to ascertain whether I was correct in my opinion or not. After considerable search I found him, and did not hesitate to approach and enter into conversation with him at once.

And here I would remark, that I have never yet met with a farmer *that had imbibed a spirit for improvement*, that did not receive me with cheerfulness and a hearty welcome. After some conversation on "matters and things" appertaining to our profession, I put the following question to him: "What agricultural paper do you take?" "The Cultivator and Genesee Farmer," was the reply.

To show the importance of gates in another point of view, besides convenience, I will relate another circumstance that occurred last fall. I was in search of a person in an adjoining town, and was directed to take a particular road and turn into the first "swing gate," which I found without difficulty, and could not but remark that it was the only gate I saw in that section.

CALEB N. BEMENT.

Three Hills, Feb. 1840.

Wintering Sheep.

It is commonly considered more difficult to winter sheep, than most other domestic animals, and this is doubtless true to a certain extent. But in nine cases out of ten, the want of success is owing to bad management, which is generally misnamed *ill luck*. Sheep, in order to bear the winter well should first of all be prepared for it by being kept in good condition at the commencement. About the 1st of December, instead of being left to roam over the fields, to obtain food from the scanty herbage, they should be entirely fed on the preserved growth of summer. Little nutriment can be found in grass at this season—besides, what now remains should be left to prepare it for an early and vigorous growth in spring.

There is one subject which has as yet received but little attention from our farmers—it is that of providing suitable sheds for the protection of sheep from the winter's cold. Now we are aware that many farmers consider this as wholly unnecessary, and believe that sheep, with their thick coats of wool, would be no more benefitted by shelter, than the down clad animals of the Arctic regions. But this is a great error. Who has not observed them, on the approach of severe weather, carefully seeking what feeble protection they could obtain from the storm, by the side of stacks, or under open fences? Would they do this, if it did not contribute to their comfort? Certainly not. Whatever, therefore contributes to their comfort demands attention, and whatever causes suffering to them, should be carefully avioded. But by constant exposure in open fields to storms and snow, they are almost constantly suffering in a greater or less degree, throughout the long months of winter. In those countries in Europe which grow large quantities of the finest wool, strict attention is given to this subject, and sheep are not only sheltered every night, but whenever the weather demands it, during the day; and this is also said to be essentially necessary in preserving the quality and fineness of the wool.

There are various methods by which proper sheds could be cheaply constructed for this purpose; the following description from Arthur Young may afford a useful hint to those who may wish to direct their attention to the subject. "The late Gen. Murray's standing folds enclosed an area of 57 yards in length, and 20 feet broad, containing 1,140 square yards. Above 708 ewes were folded in it at night, and for that number it is more than a yard and a half for each sheep. All around it was a shed nine or ten feet wide, and also across the middle, which latter was open on both sides. A rack of hay placed against the wall, which was boarded, surrounded the whole; and another, which was double, to be eaten out of on both sides, stood along the central shed; under the rack was a small manger, in which the food was given." In whatever way sheds are constructed, it is indispensably necessary that they be kept clean at all times; to effect this object, they should be frequently supplied with straw litter, which absorb all excreated matters from them, and form valuable manure.

It is a mistaken notion that water is not necessary for sheep—the fact that they always drink when it is supplied to them, proves that it is needed for the performance of the animal functions, to which it is requisite as in other animals.