

of parasitical vegetation, is very likely to commence, and this is more likely to happen in a tree which dies a natural death, than in one which is cut down in a healthy state.

The part of such block most liable to decay is the outside, which is also, when laid in a road-bed, liable to the greatest pressure when struck, say by the point of a horse's shoe at an unfavorable angle. The tendency of these two causes must be to make the blocks decay on the outside first. When the proportion of sap-wood is large, the chances of decay are increased from two causes instead of the one which exists where there is no striking or pressure to resist.

But surely cedar is not the only wood in which we ought to experiment in block-paving our streets. Several other kinds are used in England, and some not used there might be tried here.

ROOTS AS FOOD.

A very large portion of the food we eat consists of roots, such as potatoes, turnips, cabbages, broccoli, carrots, parsnips, celery, &c., &c. As the most important article of root-food we eat is the potato, it is well to begin with it and learn what we can of its constitution and its character as a food. The potato then contains about three-fourths its weight in water, 18 to 20 per cent of starch, 1 to 1.25 of gluten, and one of ash containing earthy salts of potash, soda, lime, magnesia and phosphoric acid. To obtain the best results from this kind of food great care is needed to avoid spoiling the article in cooking. Large and well-grown roots should be baked in their skins after proper washing, when they form delicious eating with beans and melted butter, for any meal in the day. Carefully peeled and cut up into the size of the ordinary cubes of loaf sugar and steamed or stewed, adding parsley and melted butter, with boneless cod (as commonly sold in five pound boxes) makes a really good, wholesome and very cheap breakfast. The quality which this kind of food possesses in a high degree is, that of toning up the stomach by hardening the delicate membrane which constitutes its interior lining, affording also a capital preventive against disordered bowels; but it should always be eaten with potato. When it is intended to boil the tubers, the best mode of doing this is to place them in a steamer in their skins. After fifteen to twenty minutes they should be tried, but not with a fork or sharp-pointed instrument; a skewer of metal or wood with a blunt point will answer the purpose best. Before they are quite done, it is a good practice to remove their skins and replace them in the steamer to dry. If peeled before cooking the most nutritious portion, viz., that containing the most gluten, the part next the skin, is removed and lost as food. Another mode of treating this root which is very much used in France and some parts of England, is by the frying-pan. They are sliced up to the form of the evaporated apples which we now see, (that is, as thin as a cent piece and about as long as the bowl of a tea-spoon,) thrown into batter and then fried in fat. To do this well, a wire basket is needed to hold the potatoes, and the melted fat should be sufficient in quantity to cover thoroughly the

whole. In a word, it should be a boiling-fat bath. When thoroughly browned, they should be lifted out of the bath and thrown upon a wire screen or paper to drain or dry, care being taken to keep them in a hot place all the time. Apples of the earth—as our French friends name them—thus treated, are very enjoyable, and furnish a pleasant variety. Potatoes left over may be advantageously worked up for breakfast by frying in the mashed or pulped condition. If a mincing machine be at hand, so much the better. The more evenly they are divided and the more carefully heated in the pan, the more successful and appetising will be the dish. When ready, pulped or mashed, throw them into the pan, not too hot, and heat them on a steady fire to a pale yellow or, say lemon color; then gather them up into the centre of the pan, place over a dish or plate to receive them, allowing it to remain one or two minutes according to the strength of the fire, or until they have acquired a nice toasted-bread color, that is about the color of clear amber maple syrup. Then turn your frying-pan upside down with one hand having the other on the back of the dish or plate, and you have a good dish of warmed-up potatoes, which, with omelette or fish, will give you an excellent and wholesome meal. Still another and very tempting dish may be made of raw grated or pulped potato dropped into milk and placed in a double saucepan, as in making oatmeal porridge. The finer this is done the more delicious will be the dish. A fine sieve may be used either after or before.

Carrots and parsnips are capable of just as many varieties of cooking, whether in vegetable or meat soups or with joints. Onions and celery are highly beneficial both as food and flavoring. In buying roots avoid the very largest, these being very often improperly and overgrown. They invariably contain too much water and woody fibre. Growth under unfavorable conditions results in a too copious secretion of water and a change of the starchy matter into wood. To those who grow their own roots, let us remark that a liberal use of the hoe and gathering at the right time, will prevent this. Good roots are heavier, bulk for bulk, than poor ones; large ones being, relatively to size, lighter than small ones. In horticultural shows *specific gravity*, which is a good test of *quality*, is too often neglected.

Roots in some form should be eaten at least once a day, because they are among the healthiest food we possess. A judicious use of such food is most potent for good in maintaining a healthy household. Remember that young and tender vegetables are always easy of digestion, and that whatever troubles of a dyspeptic character may arise from the consumption of such food, they come from woody and watery specimens or from improper selection. If not gathered at the right time, starch being converted into woody fibre, it follows that there is so much less starch for our digestive process to convert into sugar. If people would consent to take more salads and garden herbs as flavors, there would be some hope of introducing a more varied form of salad and a more graceful table with which to recuperate our all too-rapidly wasting existence in this age of hurry and bustle.

UNIFORM LAWS.

Difficulties arising out of the collateral jurisdiction of central and local authorities are still constantly making their appearance in the United States. When this occurs with a constitution of such old standing as that of the American Republic, it is not to be wondered at that such questions are constantly arising here upon the construction of the British North America Act, which is the constitution under which the machinery of government in this country is worked. With our neighbours, in reference to a great many matters, the advisability of uniform laws furnishes a strong argument in favor of the exercise of the Federal as against State authority. The same is, in a measure, true in Canada.

One of the subjects now started for discussion on the other side of the line, is the propriety of Congress making laws to secure uniformity in the rules affecting negotiable instruments. At the Bankers' convention in Saratoga lately, resolutions were adopted requiring an investigation into the constitutional rights of Congress to pass such a law. The argument of those in favor of such an enactment is, in the first place, that Congress having power to regulate commerce among the several States, has the right to deal with this subject. Secondly, that it is most desirable in the public interest that such an enactment should be passed, so that the differences existing between the rules now applicable in different States, may be abolished.

The *Boston Advertiser* acknowledges that the uniformity asked would be of a great advantage, but entertains serious doubts as to the power of Congress to pass such a law. It expresses still graver doubts as to the expediency of such an enactment even if Congress had the power. The *New York Bulletin*, on the other hand, thinks the regulation of commerce between the States clearly covers the relief for which the Bankers' Convention asks.

We cannot see how there can be two opinions as to the value of uniform laws on such a subject as that of negotiable instruments. It appears to be peculiarly necessary that the law should be uniform in such a country as the United States, where the intercourse between the different States is so large, and the dividing lines for the most part arbitrary. Indeed, it appears absurd that any country should have within its bounds different laws on such a subject. The question might, we think, be carried a step further, and taken up as an international one. The free circulation of negotiable instruments between different countries is a matter of considerable importance, and existing differences in the laws ought to be minimized, and if possible abolished.

But while we think this is clear, it does not follow that Congress has any right, under the American Constitution, to deal with the subject, unless there is some article applicable other than that which confers upon the Federal authorities the right to regulate commerce among the several States. We think the *Bulletin* lays too much stress upon the expression "commercial" paper—an expression, by the way—which is not strictly accurate. It is true that it is in re-