

HOME AND FARM.

The general agricultural outlook so far is that crops are on the whole, good throughout North America, and very bad in Europe owing to the unparalleled continuance of wet weather. The French report is particularly bad. Hay, the President of the Agricultural Society says, is destroyed, the peasants have been compelled to kill their animals, corn cannot ripen, potatoes have rotted, and the vintage will be very inferior.

The following paper on Butter-Making, read at a recent Ontario Grange Meeting, is so plain and distinct, and to a certain extent so exhaustive in the explanation of fundamental principles, that no apology is required for its reproduction. We have here and there very slightly abbreviated it.

As a rule there is no operation in domestic economy in which the average farmer's wife considers herself more nearly the mistress of the situation than that of butter-making, and sad it is to say that in none are there so many overstretchings of self-esteem and mistaken ideas of one's own qualification and knowledge of a business as in this.

We would here desire to guard against misinterpretation by adding that we do not wish to be understood as saying that the average housekeeper does not make a fair, or even what would be termed a good article of butter upon the market; but as there is no recognized standard for home-made butter, and in many markets there is not even an inspector or grader, it has become proverbial that poor butter brings very nearly as good a price as the best home made, hence but little encouragement is offered to butter-makers to study the art, and practise carefully the most improved systems of handling not only the butter, but the milk and cream. It is as well known that milk and cream improperly handled cannot produce a good article of butter, as it is that flour and yeast improperly handled cannot produce good bread; in proof whereof we have only to call attention to the fact that creamery-made butter realizes a price usually from one-third to one-half higher than the best home-made, while in many instances if a piece of each were placed before an expert he would be puzzled to tell the home-made from the creamery-made article; thus showing that while many butter-makers are thoroughly schooled in the art of butter-making and take as great pains to carry out all the necessary requirements, and produce as good an article (outfit and other opportunities considered) as the creameries, yet the proportion of butter-makers who do so is so small that the general reputation of home-made butter is far below par.

If we examine the delicate composition and nature of milk and cream we cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that it requires very careful handling. The milk is composed of four principal ingredients whose chemical combinations are so critical that a slight mistake may produce a chemical change ruinous to the production of good butter; the ingredients are caseine or matter which produces the curd; fat, contained in small round globules called globules, surrounded by a thin coating of the caseine or curd, which adheres to the little globules or drops of fat; a sweet substance called sugar of milk, which is very delicate in flavor and very susceptible to chemical change; and a thin watery substance, forming the bulk of the mixture, called whey. The fatty matter in milk varies in quantity from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, the caseine or curd from 3 to 10 per cent, and the whey or watery matter from 80 to 90 per cent. The proportions vary according to the kind of animal, the nature of the food, the temperature of the atmosphere and other circumstances. Average good milk will generally yield from 10 to 15 per cent. of its own volume in cream, the average being about $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. or one-eighth of the whole.

Milk weighs about 4 per cent. more than water, but, strange to say, rich milk is lighter than poor milk, the specific gravity of the fat being lighter than the caseine; hence to skim the milk increases its specific gravity, as shown by test of the lactometer. The fatty portions, being lighter than the caseine and whey, naturally rise to the top, forming the cream. The adhesive nature of the fat, increased by the gummy nature of the sugar of milk, causes small portions of the caseine or curdy matter to adhere to the globules or little round balls of fat or butter, covering them entirely up, so that instead of the cream presenting a yellow appearance—the real color of the fat or butter—it presents a whitish appearance—the color of the caseine or curd—and this caseine becomes so tightly glued to the little balls of fat that it necessitates the operation of churning to beat off the caseine matter adhering to the little globules of butter. Were it not for this covering of caseine or curd on the globules no churning would be required, but the cream when it rises to the top would be clear butter, only requiring to be worked to work out the butter milk, which is nothing more than a mixture of whey and curd.

(To be continued.)

Moss on fruit trees may be kept off by persistently at intervals washing the trees with strong soap-suds. If they have become mossed over, take a hoe and scrape the moss off before washing, and then wash two or three times during the next two months. An excellent wash is made as follows: To one bucketful of water add two quarts strong soft soap, half a pint crude carbolic acid, two oz. Paris green, with lime enough to make a thin paste that will adhere.

Drying off Cows—The following novel method is recommended by an English authority:—

"Get water from a smithy where iron has been cooled for some days. Give your cows a dose of salts, and two days after, a pint and a half of linseed oil. Warm your smithy water, and bathe their udders three times a day, commencing immediately after you give the salts. If the milk is not away in three days, rub the udder with vinegar."

It has been proved that the administration of iron compounds tends greatly to the lessening of the flow of milk. A dose twice a day of one dram of iodine of iron will help greatly to dry up a cow. It is a good thing also to bathe the udder with tincture of camphor and water. If the cow is very hard to dry off, feed dry food and lessen the daily ration of water.

We do not know whether any of the readers of our agricultural column are troubled with the "unspeakable" sparrow; if they are, the following note from a correspondent of the N. Y. *Country Gentleman*, may not be uninteresting:—

CUNNING OF THE SPARROWS.—I have been so overrun with sparrows that I had to feed my poultry inside the house. I have stood watch at feeding and other times, and yelled, thrown stones, beaten a box with a lath (the best thing,) and tried everything to scare them away, but failed. They would alight almost at my very feet. Well, I began feeding inside entirely, and soaked some wheat, on which I sprinkled arsenic. This I put in several places, on the roof of hen house, in my garden, &c. Did they eat it, and die? No; they would not touch it, but, singular to relate, they quite disappeared from my premises.

OUR COSY CORNER.

A handsome prayer book is a necessary addition to every grand Parisian wedding outfit. These books are designed by great artists after the missals of the 12—16th centuries, and ornamented with illuminations and the finest steel engravings and copper plates. They are bound in leather and have silver clasps and mountings, which are again quite a work of art. We lately heard of such a book costing the fabulous price of 10,000 francs.

Foot-trimmings on skirts are revived, and occasionally a quite deep flounce is seen. A pretty arrangement for soft silks is a series of pinked-out ruffles about four inches deep, gathered very full and overlapped about half the depth of each, the fluffy ruche thus formed being nearly a quarter of a yard deep. Sometimes there are only three or four ruffles thus arranged, or there may be three or four plaitings laid in double or triple box-plaits. The object is to give a fuller effect at the bottom of the skirt, which is certainly much more becoming than an untrimmed skirt, unless it be very full. The broken outline afforded by a full ruching or plaiting always enhances the beauty of a pretty foot as it peeps in and out, while it softens the defects and apparently diminishes the size of one that needs such advantage.

There seems to be almost a *fureur* for the use of moiré ribbon in narrow widths,—from one to two inches. Draperies of plain not—black, white, or cream—are striped lengthwise with these narrow ribbons, and several rows are sewed around the bottom, thus forming a plaided trimming. Skirts of soft woollen fabrics have several rows—from three to five—around the foot of the skirt, and a similar garniture often finishes the drapery, particularly if it be one of the ample, carelessly looped style made of plain breadths, and draped with reference to the figure of the wearer rather than with a "set" effect. These ribbons are also disposed in perpendicular, horizontal, and diagonal lines to form panels or fronts on skirts, and also in trolis and ladder effects.

Dining room curtains should be tied back with silk scarfs matching the color of the floral decorations.

New milking-stools brought over from Japan have bamboo legs and palm-leaf tops.

Odd glove-boxes are made of green rushes, braided, and lined with quilted satin.

Stamped and embossed leather photograph-frames are a success.

For visiting bonnets the materials used will be embroidered silk and spotted Russian tulle, and for ornaments, feathers, gold arrows, ostrich tips and silk wheat ears.

Flounces are worn on lace and silk dresses as a straight or festooned panel, or they may have several narrow, over-lapping, pleated, or ruffled ones at the front. The short Empire waist is appropriate for house or evening dresses.

Immense angel-sleeves are worn on tea-gowns.

White woolen, silk, or cotton vests and plastrons are worn with any and all dresses.

Line summer basques with French cambric, which is as cool as linen without being unhealthy when dampened.

Shirred panels are pretty with shirred plastrons and full sleeves.

Trim a tea-gown with a jabot of lace down one side, and a band of tinsel or embroidered galloon on the other.

Articles of morocco leather are rich looking in white and gold illuminated in the Gothic style.

ADVICE TO MOTHERS. Are you disturbed at night and broken of your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with pain of cutting teeth? If so, send at once and get a bottle of "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup," for Children Teething. Its value is incalculable. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately. Depend upon it, mothers, there is no mistake about it. It cures Dysentery and Diarrhoea, regulates the Stomach and Bowels, cures Wind Colic, softens the Gums, reduces Inflammation, and gives tone and energy to the whole system. "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" for children teething is pleasant to the taste, and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best female physicians and nurses in the United States, and is for sale by all druggists throughout the world. Price, 25 cents a bottle.