

The Household.

The Fireside.

THE "fireside" and "domestic hearth" are phrases often used, and they owe their significance to an institution which is fast going out of vogue. We mean the cheerful, open fire-place, with its ruddy, enlivening blaze, and air of untold comfort. This is one of the charms of home-life in winter, but the stove is rapidly superseding it. What a stretch of imagination it requires to think and speak of the side of a hot, black-looking, iron box as a "fireside"! On the other hand, how gladdening and blithesome is the open fire-place! How pleasant to come in from the outside cold and from out-door toil to the warm welcome which a bright fire flashes into your face! It is a fine picture of rural life in winter which is drawn in the following lines:—

"Tis now the time from boarding cribs to feed
The ox laborious, and the noble steed;
'Tis now the time to tend the bloating fold,
To strew with litter, and to fence from cold,
The cattle fed, the fuel piled within,
At setting day the blissful hours begin,
'Tis then, sole owner of his little cot,
The farmer feels his independent lot;
Hears with the crackling blaze that lights the wall
The voice of gladness and of Nature call;
Beholds his children play, their mother smile,
And tastes with them the fruit of Summer's toil."

The hot, dry atmosphere engendered by close stoves, is a poor substitute for "the crackling blaze that lights the wall," with its attendant cheerfulness and healthfulness. We quite concur in what "the Marvel" says on this subject, in that interesting book, "*My Farm at Edgewood*:"—

"The days of wood fires are not utterly gone, as long as I live they never will be gone. Coal may belong in the kitchens of winter—I do not say nay to this; but I do say that a country home without some one open chimney, around which, in time of winter twilight, when snows are beating against the panes, the family may gather and watch the fire flashing and crackling, and flaming and waving until the girls clap their hands and the boys shout in a kind of exultant thankfulness, is not worthy the name."

CRAB-APPLE CIDER.—In response to an article on the manufacture of cider which recently appeared in these columns, Mr. H. L. Physick, of Port Deposit, Maryland, has sent to this office a specimen of cider which he made this fall from the Hewes Virginia crab-apple. It is superior to anything in the cider line we have tasted this year.—*Scientific American*.

ITEMS WORTH COMMITTING TO MEMORY.—A bit of glue dissolved in skim milk and water will restore old crapes.

An ink-stand was turned over a white table-cloth; a servant threw over it a mixture of salt and pepper plentifully, and all trace of it disappeared.

Picture frames and glasses are preserved from flies by painting them with a brush dipped in a mixture made by boiling three or four onions in a pint of water.

Bed-bugs are kept away by washing the crevices with strong salt water, put on with a brush.

Stings and bites are often instantaneously cured by washing them in hartshorn or turpentine.

SORGHUM SEED FLOUR.—Grain and flour having become scarce among the rebels, they have devised a new source of supply, which is thus described by the *Savannah Republican*:—"We have a sample of sorghum flour, made of the seed of Chinese cane, which may be seen at our office. The person who sends it to us had no means of bolting this flour, nor had he taken off the hull of the seed before grinding; the consequence is that the flour has a pinkish color. Those who have made a trial of this excellent flour represent it as an admirable substitute for buckwheat. Made into hoe-cake, it is a very savory bread. It is likely to come into very general use, if prepared, like wheat flour, by bolting. The price at which it can be offered at market may be assumed at fifteen or twenty dollars per sack. But as an acre of sorghum gives from thirty to fifty bushels, ten dollars a sack would be a remunerative price. The production of this grain the present year, in Georgia, must amount to five millions of bushels. We have this great supply of food to fall back upon in the event of a deficiency of the common cereals, wheat

and maize. The season for buckwheat cakes comes in a month, with frost. Let the lovers of this bread try the sorghum flour. It is represented as being very similar to buckwheat when prepared as the latter is. As a substitute for coffee, no parched grain vegetable ordinarily used for that purpose is at all equal to sorghum seed. And what is still more valuable to know, in the present scarcity of sugar, a small quantity of the sirup boiled with ground seed makes the coffee substitute very pleasant and palatable."

WHY BOOTS SHOULD BE POLISHED.—Brightly-polished boots are cooler in warm weather and warmer in cold weather than dull and dusty boots; for in warm weather they reflect the sun, which dusty and dirty boots absorb; and in cold weather the clean boot does not allow the warmth of your foot to radiate freely, whereas the unclean boot does. Clean, bright boots are consequently more comfortable, as well as respectable, both in warm weather and cold. Not only will different substances, as iron and wood, give out heat or take it in, more or less, but the same substance radiates heat more or less, actively as it is bright or dull, rough or smooth. Now, dirty boots are rough as well as dull. They have a surface of many little hills and valleys, so that in truth, there is more surface for the heat to pass through either way. As a rough surface is a larger surface, more heat from within and without always passes through dull and dirty boots than polished ones.

THE CHEAPEST FILTER.—*Le Moniteur Illustré des Inventions* says:—"It is known that charcoal is the most efficacious substance that can be employed for the purification of liquids; foul and stagnant waters containing decaying animal carcasses have been purified to the extent of becoming inodorous, potable and healthy. Here is a method of constructing one of these filters in the easiest manner. Take a flower-pot, or any other vase having a hole in the bottom, fill the bottom with large round pebbles, then cover with smaller pebbles, then with coarse sand or fine gravel, and finally with about four inches of pounded charcoal. The coal may be placed in a bag and broken with a mallet or hammer. It should be sifted, and the very finest dust thrown away."

Our contemporary adds that nothing is necessary above the charcoal, but we should suppose that it ought to be covered with a clean flannel, held down by stones on the corners. The charcoal should be freshly burned, and renewed occasionally. The other parts will of course last indefinitely.—*Scientific American*.

FILLING ICE HORSES WITH SNOW.—As the time is now approaching when the supply of ice for the ensuing year is to be secured, I beg leave to give you the experience of one of our "Clifton Farmers' Club," of Clifton, Ohio. His ice-house is situated on the side of a gravel hill, covering a pit ten feet deep and twelve feet square, and is a simple frame structure over the pit about four or five feet in height; the sides of the pit are boarded up, and the drainage is through the gravel.

Finding it expensive to haul ice from the neighboring ponds and rivers, he last winter filled his house with snow after the custom prevailing in Switzerland and California, (for my friend is a traveller,) simply rolling it up in masses, and with a wheelbarrow conveying it to the house—first lining the sides of the pit with straw, and after it was filled, covering the snow with the same material, thus filling his house without cost, and securing an abundant supply of good ice for his large family during the whole summer. The snow settled down into a compact mass, when the spring and summer heats affected it, and a portion still remains at the bottom of the pit as solid as a glacier of the Alps.—*Cor. of Country Gentleman*.

HOW TO TREAT FROZEN LIMBS.—The *New York Evening Post*, in an article on this subject, says that frozen limbs should never be rubbed. The juices of the fleshy tissues, when frozen in their minute sacs or cells, at once become in each of these enclosures crystals, having a large number of angles and sharp points, and hence rubbing the flesh causes them to cut or tear their way through the tissues, so that when it is thawed, the structure of the muscle is more or less destroyed. The proper mode of treatment is thus stated:

When any part of the body is frozen, it should be kept perfectly quiet till it is thawed out, which should be done promptly. As freezing takes place from the surface inwardly, so thawing should be in the reverse order, from the inside outwardly. The thawing out of a portion of flesh, without at the same time putting the blood from the heart into circulation through it, produces mortification; but by keeping the more external parts still congealed till the internal heat and the external blood gradually soften the more interior parts, and produce circulation of the blood as fast as thawing takes place, most of these dangers are obviated.

Miscellaneous.

A Plea for Township Fairs.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—An article lately appeared in THE FARMER against township fairs, which seems to invite discussion, and with all due deference to your superior judgment, I cannot help differing from your opinion of the matter.

In the first place, we must not despise the day of small things—the greatest institutions we have sprung from small ones. We had a County Agricultural Society for several years in this County before we had one in the Township, but so little interest was taken in the matter, that half—nay, more than half the people of the Township, never knew where or when the County Show was held; much less did they prepare anything for exhibition. Not the least interest was taken in agricultural improvement. We did not know but that the best kind of stock was that which would endure the greatest amount of starvation, and the best plough the one that would turn the widest furrow, and turn it flat, so that it might lie close, and so rot the better. It is true we liked a cow to give plenty of milk, but in other respects we were in precisely the same condition in which the celebrated Arthur Young found many of the British farmers in his day, viz.: that agricultural improvement was the business of gentlemen, while poor men had better pay their debts. About ten years ago we organized a Township Society, and although our first Show might be considered a poor affair, and premiums were awarded to what competent judges would call inferior animals, yet we all felt proud of having a Show, and those who got prizes felt a dignity they never felt before, while those who were beaten resolved not to be beaten next year. Thus an impetus was given to improvement, which has urged us onward to increased exertion, and now such an interest is felt in the concern that some say they would go in for having a Township Show if there were no premiums to award. A County Society, in my opinion, never would have accomplished this. Another consideration is the distance from the County Town. Our County is about the smallest in Upper Canada, and here parties living on the outskirts find great difficulty in attending the Shows, and if they wish to exhibit horned cattle, it would require more time to get them there and back than most farmers would be willing to spend over it. In the case of fat cattle and milch cows, the thing would be out of the question. If this is the case in a small County, how much greater would the difficulty be in large ones! We are not in the same position here that they are in the Old Country, where there is a railway station within a few miles of every man's door, but we are in a country where there is hardly any road at all, especially at the season of the year when Shows are held. This centralization scheme would benefit those only who occupy a central position. A few individuals would monopolize the whole thing and gobble up all the money. It is far too much so at the present time.

It is becoming quite customary to open County Shows to other Counties, and here we see a few men of capital driving round all the Fall with a sort of menagerie of domestic animals, fed up on purpose for showing, and in a majority of cases these animals are not a fair representation of the stock kept by these men; they merely show what can be done by lavish feeding, such as is beyond the power of a small farmer to accomplish. If these men wish to compete with each other, the Provincial Exhibition is a very proper place to do it, but I will ever use what little influence I may possess in behalf of those Shows where poor men may come in for a share of the spoils, believing that the man who can increase the produce of a garden of potatoes is as much entitled to consideration as the man who pretends to greater things.

One reason more and I have done. The bigger the Show the more chance for chiselling. Compare the Provincial Exhibition with Township Exhibitions on this score. I know it is difficult to obtain competent judges at all times, especially where so many are required, and for this reason we should be charitable in our criticisms, but when we see so much mismanagement at almost every Provincial Exhibition, we get disgusted. The trial of ploughs this Fall, at Hamilton, was a perfect sham.

These, then, are some of the reasons why I would like to see Township Societies continued. You say