



The Household.

Smoking Meat.

Nor a little has been written on the subject of preparing meat, in the best possible manner, for domestic purposes, previous to placing it in the smoke-house, but little or nothing has been said of the manner of smoking it. To appearance, it has been taken for granted, that this process (so important in itself, and that it be done with care) could be performed by any one, who knows enough to build a fire. Those, who have eaten bacon smoked as it should be, and afterwards partaken of that which has been scorched, heat-burned to a crust on the outside, as is too frequently the case with the meat of many people, will detect a remarkable difference, and often denounce the latter kind, as fit for nothing but soap grease. The process of smoking meat should never be left with those who have not a faculty of exercising proper care and judgment in this business. It is not necessary that the smoke be driven in, by heating the smoke-house like Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, seven times hotter than it ought to be heated; a smoke sufficient to fill the space occupied by the meat, is the great desideratum. Log heaps, back-logs and fore-sticks should be dispensed with, because after they get once on fire, there will be too great a degree of heat. And besides this, in wooden smoke-houses, there is a great danger of setting everything on fire. Such instances I have known to occur; and loss of the meat was the consequence.

The best, most effective, cheapest and neatest manner of smoking meat that has ever come under my observation, is, to place a shovel of live coals in an old pan, or some low dish, and lay on them a few sugar maple chips. Dry ones are the best, for it requires too much fire to use green ones. No other wood will produce so sweet smoke as sugar maple, and the coals of it will keep alive as long or longer than the coals of other wood. In the absence of chips, we use corn cobs, which are nearly as good as chips. Three or four laid on a few coals will produce smoke sufficient, to fill any ordinary smoke-house.

As a substitute for a smoke-house, we have been accustomed to use a molasses hog-head, covered with board on the top, and a hole sawed in the side near the bottom, large enough to admit a small pan of coals, with a cob or two, or a few small chips. Thus we avoid all danger of setting fire to the smoke house, and consuming meat and all, and our meat is not half baked, but presents a clean copper coloured appearance.

Let those, who have been accustomed to smoke their meat over a log heap adopt the mode of smoking I gently, and then say which way is the best. *Editor.*

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—The above hints are well worthy of being heeded. It is not heat but smoke that is wanted to cure meat well. The suggestion about the molasses barrel is a good one, and may be of service to those who think a regular house necessary for smoking meat. We have known a dry-goods box used in a similar manner, and with complete success. Such a box, raised off the ground, having a cast-iron pan or old kettle let into the bottom to hold the smouldering chips, and having a door hung with leather hinges, will answer a better purpose and hold more meat than many who may be tempted to smile at this note would suppose. We have seen meat hanging in the tops of wattle chimneys, in new localities, but this is a slovenly, unsatisfactory plan, and with such cheap, easily adopted contrivances as are named above, is rendered quite unnecessary.

TO RENDER FEATHERS FIT FOR USE FOR BEDS, PILLOWS, &c.—Put them in strong paper bags, and these in the oven as soon as the bread comes out; remaining there till the next day, they will be sufficiently dry to prevent the animal juices decomposing and causing a most disagreeable smell. After this, strip the feathery part from the quill of all those whose points are sufficiently strong for pressure to cause their piercing the bed-case. They should be again put in the oven for twelve hours to render them quite sweet and safe from moth, whose eggs might possibly have been deposited among them.

The Art of Walking.

It is a graceful human step the heel is always raised before the foot is lifted from the ground, as if the foot were a part of a wheel rolling forward; and the weight of the body, supported by the muscles of the calf of the leg, rests for the time on the fore part of the foot and toes; there is then a bending of the foot in a certain degree. But when strong wooden shoes are used, or any shoes so stiff that it will not yield and allow the bending of the foot, the heel is not raised at all until the whole foot rises with it; so that the muscles of the calf are scarcely used, and in consequence, soon dwindle in size and almost disappear. Many of the English farm servants wear heavy, stiff shoes; and in London it is a striking thing to see the drivers of country waggons with fine robust persons in the upper part, but with legs that are flexible spindles, producing a gait which is awkward and unmanly. The brothers of these men, who are otherwise employed, are not so misshapen. What a pity that, for sake of a trifling saving, fair nature should be thus deformed! An example of this kind is seen in Paris, where the streets have few or no side pavements, and the ladies have to walk almost constantly on tip-toe, the great action of the muscles of the calf has given conformation of the leg and foot to match which the Parisian bells proudly challenge all the world—not aware, probably, that it is a defect in their city to which the peculiarity in their form is in part owing. *Scientific American.*

CHAPPED HANDS.—WATERPROOF BLACKING.—“Editor” asks: “Mr. Editor, if not deemed unfit subjects for your paper, would you, in your next issue, kindly give me a way to cure chapped hands, and also what you would recommend as a good waterproof blacking, which will at the same time polish well and preserve the leather?”

Ans.—Pure glycerine, which may be obtained of any druggist, is a very good application for chapped hands. Better still is the following lotion: Glycerine, half an ounce; tannin, 20 grains; whisky, half an ounce; rose-water, one ounce; mix and shake well before using. The following is said to be a good recipe for waterproof boots and shoes. Take three ounces of spermaceti and melt in an earthen vessel over a slow fire; add thereto six drachms of India rubber, cut in slices, and these will presently dissolve; then add of tallow eight ounces, hog-lard two ounces, amber varnish four ounces; mix, and it will be fit for use immediately. The boots or other materials to be treated, are to receive two or three coats with a common blacking brush, and a fine polish is the result.

TO CLEAN BRITANNIA METAL.—Rub the article with a piece of flannel moistened with sweet oil; then apply a little pounded rotten stone or polishing paste with the finger, till the polish is produced; then wash the article with soap and hot water, and when dry, rub with soft wash-leather, and a little fine whiting.

HOW TO DRIVE CUT NAILS.—It is often difficult to drive common cut nails into hard timber, boards, &c. They will never “fly out,” however, if first rubbed with soap—common bar or any hard soap will answer. Screws treated in the same manner may also be driven with much greater ease. Soap is much better than oil, and at the same time more convenient.

A HAPPY HOME.—Six things are requisite to create a happy home. Integrity must be the architect, and tidiness the upholsterer. It must be warmed by affection, lightened up with cheerfulness, and industry must be the ventilator, renewing the atmosphere and bringing in fresh salubrity day by day; while over all, as a protecting canopy and glory, no hinge will suffice except the blessing of God.

HOW TO FOLD A DRESS.—The following is said to be a good plan to fold a dress. Our lady readers ought to know:—“Take the exact quarters of the dress, from the bottom of the skirt to the sleeves, double them together with the bosom out; then, on a bed lay the skirt perfectly smooth, and begin at the bottom to fold it up just the width of the trunk or drawer. The waist and sleeves will fold nicely together.”

WISBOW GARDENING IN DENMARK.—Graves's recent “Cruise in the Baltic,” tells us: “In Copenhagen every window is filled with pretty flower pots, in which roses, pinks and fuchsias seem to thrive to perfection. These beautiful plants give a neat effect to the fronts of the houses, and tell the passing stranger of the deeply rooted love of flowers which forms part of the national character of the Danes as well as of the Swedes.”

The farmer's library need not be large or expensive. It need not be purchased all at once. The reading of it need not detract one hour from the important labours of the field. But every farmer should, by all means, have a library. He needs one for his own benefit. He should have some scientific knowledge of the various operations he is daily performing, both for his own enjoyment and so as to be able to give a reason for everything he does on his land. His children should be taught the philosophy of agriculture more or less thoroughly, that they may be attached to the calling, and may make improvements in it.

CANDLES.—Take of alum five pounds, dissolve entirely in ten gallons of water, bring the solution to the boiling point, and add twenty pounds of tallow, boiling the whole for an hour skimming constantly. Upon cooling a little, strain through thick muslin or flannel; set aside for a day or two for the tallow to harden; take it from the vessel, lay aside for an hour or so for the water to drip from it, then heat in a clean vessel sufficiently to mould; when moulded, if you desire to bleach them lay upon a plank by the window, turning every two or three days. Candles made strictly by the above receipt will burn with a brilliancy equal to the best adamantine, and fully as long.

OUR BED-ROOMS.—Our bed-rooms are too often fit only to die in. The best are those of the intelligent and affluent, which are carefully ventilated; next to these come those of the cabins and ruder farm-houses, with an inch or two of vacancy between the chimney and the roof, and with cracks on every side, through which the stars may be seen. The ceiled and plastered bed-rooms, wherein too many of the middle classes are lodged, with no other apertures for the ingress or egress of air but the doors and windows, are horrible. Nine-tenths of their occupants rarely open a window, unless compelled by excessive heat, and very few are careful even to leave the door ajar. To sleep in a tight six-by-ten bed-room, with no aperture admitting air, is to court the ravages of pestilence, and invoke the speedy advent of death.

A WORD ABOUT CHAIRS.—An eminent physician speaking of our chairs, remarks that they are too high and too nearly horizontal. We slide forward and our spines ache. The seats should be fifteen or sixteen inches high in front for men, and from eight to fourteen inches for children and women. The back part of the seat should be from one to three inches lower than the front part. This last is very important. The depth of the seat from front to back should be the same as the height. The chair-back is likewise unphilosophical. The part which meets the small of the back should project furthest forward. Instead of this, at that point there is generally a hollow, this is the cause of much pain and weakness in the small of the back. The present seats produce discomfort, round shoulders and other distortions.

CURING MEAT.—To one gallon of water, take one and a half pounds of salt, half a pound of sugar, half an ounce of saltpetre, and half an ounce of potash. In this ratio the pickle is to be increased to any quantity required. Let these be boiled together until all the dirt from the sugar rises to the top, and is skimmed off. Then throw it into a tub to cool, pour it over your beef or pork, to remain the usual time, say four or five weeks. The meat must be well covered with pickle and should not be put down for at least two days after killing, during which time it should be slightly sprinkled with powdered saltpetre, which removes the surface blood, &c., leaving the meat fresh and clean. Some omit boiling the pickle and find it to answer well; though the operation of boiling purifies the pickle by throwing off all the dirt always found in salt and sugar. If this receipt be properly tried, it will never be abandoned. There is none that surpasses it, if so good.

HOW TO MAKE A GOOD STEW.—Pieces of indifferent meat, such as when fitted are uneatable, can be made into a most acceptable stew. A neck piece of mutton will furnish an excellent meal, cheap, and good enough for anybody. The meat in a stew should be thoroughly done until it is tender. If there is much fat, cook the meat the day beforehand with water only, let it cool, and remove the fat from the surface. The vegetables may be added and cooked just before the meal at which the stew is wanted. By managing in this way, a thoroughly cooked stew can be had for breakfast. For a breakfast dish take meat and potatoes only—with a seasoning of salt and pepper. For dinner the vegetables may be varied; mutton with potatoes and onions, makes the celebrated Irish stew; with carrots, a delicious dish; with tomatoes, it is superb, and with green peas and tender bits of asparagus, it is fit to set before a king. Beef instead of mutton, will give another series of dishes.