

AGRICULTURAL.

Keeping Quality of Cheese.

The cheese trade of the present period presents different phases than it used to, some of which we will consider. The maker of the past had to produce stock possessed of long keeping qualities, at least that was his aim, though in the endeavor, to use a modern slang expression, he often "got left." In youth the writer's associations were linked with cheese and cheese making, and we can often remember of following after the August cheese buyer of the period who, robed in a long linen duster, would ride up to the factory once a month or so, and, with an air of profound wisdom, go in to inspect the cheese. They lay on pine counters, long yellow rows numbered by the many hundreds, the accumulation of at least two months' manufacture. Despite precautions, the crucial heat of mid-summer had laid its hands heavily on many of the oldest, and the buyer complains of "off flavor;" a few cracks and crevices have escaped the eye of the busy maker, and the gentleman in linen detects evidence of skippers. Then he takes another general survey of the stock and button-holes the proprietor one side to make an offer. He is working for a commission and shipping house, and his actions are controlled by their telegrams. If the salesman is shrewd, perhaps there is a long time consumed in striking a bargain, or perhaps no sale is consummated at all, and another buyer with different figures gets the lot a week or a fortnight hence. That's the way it once was, but now times are different. If the factorymen then had facilities for placing their cured cheese in cold storage large financial losses might have been averted and general quality kept on a higher plane. The way it is now with regular weekly shipments from the factory, and but few cheese held on the shelves of greater age than fifteen or twenty days, keeping quality is not made a prime object with the average maker. Is this always the course of wisdom? We think not, and will state our reasons. In order to get a cheese ready for market in from twelve to fourteen days from the hoop a large amount of rennet must be used quickly to coagulate the milk; but a slight trace of acid must be tolerated or there will be too much firmness to overcome, and for the same reason salt is used in sparing proportion. The result is that the activity of the rennet unhampered by acid or salt soon mellow the cheese into edible quality, which if quickly consumed answers all purposes, but if not used before its future flavor, for it possesses no stable foundation to stand upon. Even with a ready market makers should always be careful not to carry this subject of quick maturity to an extreme; rather keep on the right side and be conservative in this line. Superiors with no real practical knowledge have no right to dominate to makers the standard they ought to go by in cheese making. A good cheese maker ought to comprehend the requisites of turning out with superior article without dictation from men with superficial trade knowledge; if not, he is not fit to work over a vat. Beware of keeping a thoroughly cured cheese in a high temperature. Cold storage is the place for it.

Scarcity of Hides.

An interesting fact to the breeders of cattle is the high prices which are now being paid for hides. The causes which have brought this about are several. Probably the troubles in the Argentine Republic and other South American countries had more to do with it than anything else. But other causes were at work, such as the rapid depletion of cattle in the Middle and Northern States, consequent upon low prices, and the substitution of an enormous extent of mutton and pork for beef by consumers, helped largely by the outcry against diseased cattle. However the advance has been quite a relief to cattle-growers, for it has made cattle worth fully \$2 per head more. That the advance is likely to last for a time we fully believe. Referring to this point the *Boal and Shoe Reporter* of a late date says: "Contrary to the opinions of the believers in lower prices, a member of one of the largest leather firms in the country is authority for the report that hides are very scarce. He had telegraphed, he said, to all parts of the country, and almost of the civilized world, to secure hides, but was unable to do so. To be sure there are hides enough to be bought, but what this gentleman alluded to was the difficulty of getting desirable stock at prices which are at all satisfactory. He believes that the future position of leather will be even stronger than now, and that the sooner shoe men realize this the better it will be for them."

Ripening Tomatoes for Early Market.

In growing tomatoes for market, the premium is and always has been on earliness more than on any other one thing. Whoever succeeds in getting his crop before his customers a week in advance of his competitors, is sure of a good price, and of good profits, and this even when the fruit is not up to the standard as to size and quality.

This observation is not new, nor confined to this country. The market gardeners about Paris, France, have also found it out some time ago, and as told in the *Revue Horticole*, often employ artificial means for hastening the maturity of the crop. To do this, the fruit is picked when yet green, but approaching maturity, and spread out upon a layer of straw under the hot-bed sashes. Here they are lightly sprinkled from time to time, to keep the atmosphere moist, and prevent them from shriveling. During the greatest heat, on bright days, partial shade must be provided, else the tomatoes will be liable to get burned or scalded.

It takes but a few days of such treatment to bring out the bright color of maturity in the fruit, but the latter usually fails to attain to the full rich flavor of the tomato when naturally ripened. The quality of specimens picked in the more advanced stages of ripeness, however, as indicated by even the slightest beginning of coloring, is not perceptibly impaired or altered. Melons may be treated in a similar way for the purpose of hastening their maturity.

Our progressive market gardeners usually rely for their early fruit mostly on the selection of such early varieties as King of the Earlies, Earliest Advance, perhaps Dwarf Champion, etc., and on starting the plants very early under glass. It may pay them to try the method here described.

Fairs as Educators.

Many of the visitors at our fairs look at the horses on exhibition as they do at the wild animals in a menagerie. They admire

the size, style, action or any other good quality that the horse may represent and then go off and wonder how it "happens" that some horses have so many good qualities while so many, including their own of course, have so few. To some farmers it seems as if a selected few were destined to be possessors of horses of superior quality, while the great majority must be content to stick to the scrubs. The idea never enters their heads that the best is within the reach of all in the line of horse breeding at this age of the world, and no insurmountable barriers lie in the way of the man who has the ambition to breed as good horses as can be found anywhere.

Fairs are among the farmers' greatest educators, and the exhibits found there are the object lessons that are calculated to be indelibly stamped upon the minds of those who inspect them. It is not only your right and privilege to know as much as possible about the exhibits, but those making the shows are always glad to impart any desired information. An exhibitor makes a mistake who is not ready at all times to answer such questions as may be asked by those who are inspecting his stock. But few there are who show horses who have not the idea of advertising them by so doing, and the more we can get the public interested in their stock the better they accomplish their object. A spectator should not hesitate to make enquiry about all points in regard to which he is in doubt. There is no better place to compare the different breeds of horses than when you see them side by side or in the show ring contending for honors. The progressive farmer can put in his time to no better purpose than to visit the horse departments of the fairs held in nearly every section of the country and there make up his mind what kind of horses most nearly reach his idea in regard to the perfect horse. The next two months will afford opportunities for this kind of work that should not be overlooked.—(National Stockman and Farmer.)

Prevention of Hoar Frost.

The prevention of early autumnal frosts, strange to say, has received scarcely any attention in Canada, although it is quite practicable, and would save hundreds of thousands of dollars annually by extending the growing season several weeks.

Early in September the inland and higher districts of Ontario, especially in the northern parts of the province, look for frosts damaging to the more tender garden vegetables. By the end of the month hoar frosts usually occur over most of the province; only the lake borders of the southern counties and a few other favored localities along the lakes escaping. Damaging frosts, which would kill potatoes, almost invariably occur over nearly the whole country before the advent of the great growth of our city and town population, the possibility of delaying the advent of the first killing frost becomes a matter of much commercial importance. It not infrequently means a month's extension of the season for tomatoes and other autumn fruits and vegetables. To the grower of the more delicate of grapes, and even in some vines, it is a matter of concern, while in occasional years the grower of our inland districts would find the prevention of a light early September frost save him thousands of dollars through preventing deterioration in the quality of his crop.

Hoar frost occurs at various temperatures. Commonly, especially in the humid lake borders, it is rare on average soils when the mercury at ordinary elevation above the ground does not fall to 36°, in the inland counties, where the atmosphere is less humid, and radiation consequently is more intense, it not infrequently occurs at 39°. It has been known in Ontario at 42° and in California at as high a temperature as 46°, or fourteen degrees above the freezing point. There are some localities especially liable to frosts. These have damp soils, in which the evaporation produces a loss of heat; or where the shallow surface earth rests on an impervious, non-conducting subsoil, which excludes internal heat from the surface vegetation on nights when, under a coal-black, moistureless sky, the radiation is excessive. It is such spots that give rise to many reports of early hoar frosts which are not experienced on the average soils around.

The most obvious preventive of early frost is thorough drainage—both surface and under drainage. Subsoil plowing too is here an advantage. But on the best drained soils there are September or October nights when frost occurs without a fall of the mercury to freezing point. Here the utility of the smudge fire is apparent. A few smoldering rubbish heaps, scattered along the western side of the garden, vineyard or hop yard will amply suffice to ward off such frosts. The piles may be slightly damped, if need be, to make them burn with little fire and much smoke, but even a thin film of vapor, so thin that the stars may be seen through it, will check radiation and maintain on the surface of the plants a temperature six to ten degrees greater than could be recorded without the presence of the protecting veil.

In many parts of Europe, as on the Rhine, where early September and even August frosts occur, the vineyards are commonly protected by smudge fires. The hop yards and gardens of that continent also extensively use this expedient. It is not so much needed in insular climates like Britain, where autumn is rarely sunny enough to ripen vegetables that escape frost, but in continental climates like our own, where ripening warmth and sunshine sometimes are unbroken for weeks after the first damaging frost, the smudge fire deserves to have a well recognized place in the methods of the gardener and farmer.

It was hardly to be expected that Englishmen who have such a history behind them would look to Canada for pointers on how to frame a national constitution. Possessing a system that contains the best thought of many successive generations of England's wisest statesmen it might have been thought that they would scorn to learn of younger nations. Reports from Ottawa, however, show that the unexpected has happened—a Rev. Mr. Kane, vicar of Bicester, Oxford, England, and Mr. John Roche Q. C., of Dublin, being at present in this country for the purpose of studying the workings of the Canadian constitution and enquiring more fully into the advantages of local autonomy. This is no slight tribute to the political wisdom of those who constructed the instrument under which for twenty three years Canadians have lived so peacefully and prosperously.

An Afternoon Wedding and Supper

It has been truthfully said that "there are two important events in every one's life, when they are born and when they die." For many, there is a third event that seems equally as important—marriage. It is said that "marriages are made in Heaven," but many of them could more appropriately be claimed by the "other place." Perhaps this would not be so were not so many of them entered into with a laugh and a jest, and the thought, "if I don't like it I can get a divorce."

But while I am prosing, my young couple are waiting. They had decided after mature deliberation, with economy and good management, they could both live on but little more than his board was costing. He had a cosy little home in a country village, a few hundred miles distant, and a salary of six hundred a year. She had nothing but the little earned with her own hands at dress-making, but both had good health and the determination to make the best of life. The wedding was given by the bride's sister, at her home; a prettily arranged house, with a small hall, double parlors, a sleeping room opening with folding doors at one side of the back parlor, and a large dining-room and kitchen in one. The invitations were written by the bride, on plain, heavy cream-tinted note paper, using the regular formula, and were sent out in the host's and hostess's name.

As the guests arrived they were shown into one of the up-stairs rooms, where they left their wraps. The host and hostess received their guests at the parlor door, and then into the back parlor to await the coming of the bridal party. At the appointed hour, two p. m., the bride and groom arrived, the groom dressed in the conventional suit of black coat with vest to match, striped or gray trousers, and white lawn neck-tie—the bride in a travelling suit of gray cloth of light quality, made with a blouse showing a full front of the cloth with velvet revers, edged with silver cord. The plain skirt was caught high on the left side, showing deep points of velvet, edged with cord. Neither wore gloves; and the bride carried no flowers.

My bride and groom have been waiting all this time in the hall, and we now see them enter the front parlor and advance to the double doors where they remained standing under the draped portieres. The minister met them there and pronounced the words that made them "man and wife." After the ceremony, the bride and groom stepped back into the front parlor, and while they were receiving congratulations, the hostess and her two young lady assistants arranged a number of little tables in the back parlor; each table was covered with a plain, white hem-stitched towel, and at each place was a napkin, knife, two forks, two spoons, a butter-dish with a little butter patty, and a glass of water. On the napkin lay a button-hole bouquet, tied with white satin ribbon and having a pin attached. The guests were invited out to the tables; and after grace the supper was served in the following manner: Platter with a large portion of scalloped potatoes cut in slices and arranged on a large platter, garnished with parsley; after this thin slices of white and brown bread, on a plate covered with a pretty dolly. This was followed by a platter of cold boiled ham, garnished with slices of hard-boiled eggs, and with this was passed little cucumber pickles and olives; then came salmon salad served on a lettuce leaf. Over a saucer lay a large lettuce leaf, then the salad.

The plates, butter-dishes, soiled knives and forks were removed, and ice cream and saucers garnished with strawberries, the saucers set on plates with little dillies between. As the dillies are to be slipped aside with the saucers they give the tables a pretty appearance, and leave the plates for cake, kisses, and lady's fingers. The last course was coffee and the bride's cake; the coffee poured over rich cream in little cups, and passed on a server with a bowl of loaf bread to be first presented to the bride to eat, then passed to the guests. After supper a few pleasant moments were spent in looking at the presents, which were tastefully arranged in the sleeping room. I will mention only one, a remembrance from a young lady friend. It was a set of six tablemats, made of Irish linen and worked with white embroidery silk; the largest one was a carrying cloth, a yard long, and one-half yard wide, finished with hem-stitching and a narrow border of drawn-work; inside of this was a deep border, running to a point at the corners, of interlacing rings, (the size of a silver half-dollar) and outlined with the embroidery silk, then filled in with fancy stitches. The other five were made and finished the same; two of them were ten inches square, and designed for bread or cake plates; the remaining three were seven inches square, and to be used for dillies.

Shortly after, the bride and groom departed for their new home, followed by showers of rice, slippers, and other equally as appropriate articles, and with the wishes of all that their bright anticipations for the future might be fully realized. As the guests bade the host and hostess good-by, they were each presented with a package of wedding cake, neatly done up in square sheets of tissue paper, and tied together at the corners with a narrow white ribbon. With the closing of the door, we also bid our hostess good-bye, and tell how the dishes were prepared.

SCALLOPED POTATOES.

Select firm, medium-sized potatoes; wash, pare, and cut in thin slices. In an earthen baking-dish place a layer of the sliced potatoes; sprinkle lightly with salt, pepper, little chunks of butter, and a very little flour, then another layer of potatoes; and so on until the dish is full to within an inch of the top. Fill the dish with sweet milk to set in the oven to bake. It will require two, three, or four hours, according to the size of dish filled. One-half cupful of chicken or beef broth, mixed with the milk is considered an improvement by many. Serve warm.

PRESSED CHICKEN.

Use plump, young chickens; allow one and a half pints of cold, salted water for each chicken, let come to a boil gradually, then boil fast until the meat will fall from the bones, and the liquor is reduced to less than half; while boiling the liquor should be skimmed several times. Chop the meat fine, first removing the bones and skin; strain the liquor through a cloth; season the

meat and liquor well with salt and pepper, (chopped celery or celery salt may be used if the flavor is liked) and press firmly into an earthen mold; set away to cool with a heavy plate over it.

BOILED HAM.

For a small company, get seven or eight pounds with the bone, have it cut from the center of the ham, and in as large and compact a form as possible; put over to boil in cold water, letting it come to a boil slowly, and skim often while boiling; when done remove from the stove, and let stand over night, or until perfectly cold, in the liquor in which it was boiled. Trim off all the superfluous fat before slicing. If home-cured ham is used, let stand in luke-warm water for an hour and a half, then put in cold water, and boil. Many think a few spices boiled with the ham give it a desirable flavor.

SALMON SALAD.

Four hard-boiled eggs, cut in small cubes; several crisp, fresh lettuce leaves torn in pieces, and a can of salmon; put all in a large earthen dish; just before serving, pour over it the following dressing and mix lightly with a fork: One-half cupful of vinegar, one-half cupful of sweet cream, two eggs, one tablespoonful of butter, one teaspoonful of mustard and black pepper, pinch of cayenne, a little sugar and salt; beat the eggs light, mix all together, leaving out the cream; put into a bowl over boiling water and stir until it becomes like cream; use when cold, and stir the cream in just before using.

COCONUT CAKE.

One and one-half cupfuls of white sugar beaten to a cream with one-half cupful of butter, add a scant two-thirds cupful of sweet milk, mix in lightly two cupfuls of flour with one teaspoonful of cream-tartar and one-half teaspoonful of soda, or two teaspoonfuls baking powder, the well-beaten whites of three eggs; bake in three layers. Filling: Make a frosting with the whites of one egg and a small cup of sugar; reserve one-third of the frosting, and stir the rest thick with coconut; place between the layers; spread the reserved frosting on the top of last layer, and sprinkle lightly with coconut; fresh grated coconut is preferable.

KISSES.

The well-beaten whites of two eggs and one-half cupful of white sugar; beat until it will stand in peaks; drop on buttered paper (writing paper is best) and bake in a quick oven until a delicate brown; for a change, use hickory nut meats or blanched almonds chopped fine, mixed in while beating.

LADY'S FINGERS.

Mix one-half pound of powdered sugar, one-fourth pound of flour, four eggs (yolks and whites separate) beaten very stiff; one lemon, all the juice, and half the grated rind. Beat well; drop a small spoonful on buttered paper, not too near together; try one, and if it runs beat the mixture some minutes longer, adding a very little flour. Bake until a delicate yellow; brown in a very quick oven. When nearly cool dip them in a chocolate icing; use a boiled frosting, and after the syrup is poured over the well-beaten white of an egg, add three tablespoonfuls of grated chocolate; whip until well mixed.

BRIDE'S CAKE.

Whites of eleven eggs, one and one-half cupfuls of powdered sugar, one cupful of flour, one small teaspoonful of cream-tartar, one teaspoonful of vanilla. Beat the whites to a stiff froth; add the sugar, flour, and before using, and the flour four times, adding the cream tartar before sifting the last time. Bake in a very slow oven without buttering the tin; when done, turn the tin upside down, resting the corners on something so that the air can reach it while cooling. Icing: Boil one cup of powdered sugar with one tablespoonful of water until it will thread from a spoon or broom splinter, (do not stir while cooking) pour it gradually over the well-beaten white of one egg and beat, not stir, until it will spread without running. The ice cream should be ordered from some reliable caterer, or else made by one who has had experience; as the best recipes often fail when tried for the first time, especially on such momentous occasions. Neither is it necessary to give recipes for coffee, white or brown bread, as many good ones have already been given in the *LADIES' JOURNAL*.

German Rule in Africa

A report which seems to be well authenticated comes from eastern Africa to the effect that the German Commander at Bagamoyo has issued a decree authorizing the traffic in slaves within the territory under German protection. Travellers from the coast, who have recently arrived in Zanzibar confirm the report, and state "that the dealers expelled from Zanzibar have established themselves in Bagamoyo and are doing a thriving business. Broker's houses are now full of slaves, having been established under German license. The news of the proclamation has spread over the whole coast, and traffic has revived to an extent unknown in thirty years." Certainly this is bad news, and as might be expected has excited very great surprise in Europe, especially in England where it is felt to be a violation of the recent Anglo-German treaty. Referring to the decree the London *Times* says "that unless Germany promptly disavows the friendly arrangement contemplated in the Anglo-German agreement will be altogether out of the question." That Germany will readily comply with England's demand in this respect is open to question. The following from the Berlin *Post* which is said to voice the feelings in official circles and is in harmony with the Government newspapers would seem to indicate that whatever England may have thought, Germany had no intention of summarily suppressing the traffic in slaves within her territory. Says that paper under date of Sept. 16: "The Sultan's decree prohibiting the slave traffic does not operate in German territory, where, under existing treaties, a German commissioner exercises public powers. Germany never had any intention of unqualifiedly abolishing all forms of slavery. The Reichstag agreed that measures against slave traffic and man hunting should be taken only by degrees, with due regard to the existing order of things." How Germany can reconcile this policy with the pledges given by her representatives at the Anti-Slavery Congress which met so recently in Brussels, is difficult to perceive. It is to be hoped that the remonstrances of England will be more than any other nation, is interested in the suppression of this infamous traffic on the Dark Continent, as well as the proud position which Germany occupies among Christian nations, will induce her rulers to speedily revoke the inhuman and disgraceful decree.

The Domestic Treasury

"There is an evil under the sun, and it is common among men." So wrote the royal philosopher of the olden time, and so reasons Mrs. Alice E. Ives as she turns to consider the manner in which the domestic treasury is frequently managed. Mrs. Ives, whose article appears in the September *Forum*, contends that the refusal or negligence of many husbands to provide their wives with a regular allowance for pocket or pin money, resulting in their being obliged to ask their liege lords for every cent they wish to spend, is one of the crying evils of the time, which, not only for the sake of the humiliated wives who are really slaves in all but the name, but also for the sake of the children that may be born in such homes, demands the attention of well-wishers of society everywhere. She asserts that this anomalous and uncertain relation of the wife to the family purse is a frightful source of deceit, fraud, and double-dealing on her part, or, where the sense of honor is too strong in the wife to permit her to go through her husband's pockets at night, or instruct the milliner to send in a bill for \$40 when \$30 is the real amount, in order that she may have the extra \$10 for herself, her soul chafes against the yoke until it is sick and sore." After citing a number of instances which came under her own observation where the wife had no money that she could call her own, and where after longing for some trifle to be given as a present to friend or child she had to pass it by because of lack of means to buy, or had to practice deceit in order to secure the money, Mrs. Ives summons science to her aid and argues that "the mother who is obliged to lie and steal in order to possess any money of her own will, in all probability, be the mother of criminals. They may never see the interior of a prison, but they will be criminals in their dealings with their fellow-men. At best they will have very vague ideas of moral responsibility." This argument is incontrovertible, unless all we hear in these days about heredity is so much "idle wind." Besides the influence in this direction Mrs. Ives perceives other evil consequences as flowing from the common practice. Extravagance resulting in ruin is almost sure to follow, if the wife, ignorant of her husband's financial interests gets an opportunity of drawing on his pile; usefulness for grappling with the situation if left a widow with perhaps children to support; and discouraging of matrimony altogether. On this last point she remarks, "young women who are self-reliant and earn good salaries often shrink from marriage, because they cannot bear to be so dependent. Nor can one blame independent women for hesitating before they take a leap in the dark."

Turning to the remedy for the evil Mrs. Ives suggests the method of granting to the wife a stated weekly or monthly allowance for the household and other uses in proportion to the income of the husband. In this way she will be apt to make the best use of the money when she knows what she is to expect each week. As to those who are only contemplating the happy relation, Mrs. Ives advises, "No woman ought to marry without having some understanding with her future husband on this point. She need not take pencil and paper and make him set down the exact figures of her weekly allowance, but she should let him understand that she expects one." She continues, "this will sound horribly sordid to the bluish young creature who is wrapped up in the contemplated orange blossoms and the light which shines in her darling's eyes; but the orange blossoms will be laid aside, and alas! occasionally the light of his smile, and hard facts are sure to bob up in the housekeeping." A better way the New York *Sun* thinks is that in vogue among the French "who have a custom of accumulating a dowry for every daughter of a family, no matter how humble. From the day the child is born the money for the purpose is laid aside, and if as she grows she earns money for herself, she herself contributes to it. Then when she marries she has a little money capital of her own, with all the accruing moral and material advantages. That is the proper way, and as civilization and population increase it will become the custom here. Mrs. Ives wants the girl to give her affianced to understand that she expects a weekly allowance, but that plan will not work. Such an attempt on her part would chill the love-making. The level-headed parent must deal with a matter so sordid as compared with the ecstasy of the moment; and if he can say that he has stowed away a little pot of money for the peculiar use of his daughter in marriage, so much the better. The happiness of the girl may depend on the arrangement."

The Care of the Hands

Probably there is no one thing that makes girls shrink from housework more than the effect it has on the hands, especially in cold weather. It is a real trial to sit down to the piano and spread a stained, rough hand on the ivory keys; or to take one's pen in an unsightly hand to answer a letter; or to pick up a bit of embroidery, if it is only that on perforated hose, and use the needle when everything that touches the hands sticks to them because of their roughness. Sewing on woollen or silk is at such times severe penance. There are methods of preserving the hands measurably against the destructive effect of dishwashing, scrubbing, and the like. They should be kept as much out of the water as possible, and when the work is done they should be washed clean and rubbed dry. Borax water is good for washing the hands. Coarse soap in washing the hands. White unscented soaps are the best, as the highly-scented soaps are usually made of rancid fats. A solution of oxalic acid will remove fruit stains from the hands, but it must not touch an abraded surface. After washing and drying the hands thoroughly, glycerine and spirits of camphor equal parts mixed together is good to rub over them. Coconut oil is a pleasant application. Wearing kid gloves two sizes too large is helpful in preserving the hands. One should have an old pair of gloves to take up ashes in, to sweep in, and to wear in all dirty work that permits the wearing of gloves. If gloves are dipped in not very hot linseed oil they become waterproof, and may be worn while washing dishes. A pair of cotton flannel mittens is pleasant to wear when hanging out the clothes on a cold morning. Frequent vigorous rubbing of the hands will promote circulation and keep the skin in good condition. To take the best care of the nails, soak the ends of the fingers in hot water for some time, until the skin is softened, then dry, and with a pair of nail scissors thin off all the dead skin about the nails and trim the nails neatly.