

THE LADIES.

THE DEPARTED WIFE.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

When from the pleasant hearth is borne away
Its sweet presiding spirit—when the voice
That gave its melody is hushed and mute—
When bower, and garden, with their clustering charms
Bare plants, and tinted flowers, and trellised vines
Implore in vain her ministry, who loved
Nature and nature's God—what can restore
Solace to him, who in his house and heart
Doth find a hermit vacancy, and mourn
In bitterness of grief?

What save the thought
That she, who was the sunbeam of his soul
Hath gone to be an angel, with her white hand
Still beckoning through the cloud for him, for him
To share the fulness of eternal joy?

Hartford, March, 1848.

USUAL METHODS OF PRESERVING OUR ORDINARY FRUITS, ROOTS, AND VEGETABLES, WITHOUT SUGAR, FOR WINTER'S STORE.

It had long been a desideratum to preserve fruits by some cheap method, yet such as would keep them fit for the various culinary purposes, as making tarts and other similar dishes. The expense of preserving them with sugar is a serious objection; for, except the sugar is in considerable quantity, the success is very uncertain. Sugar also overpowers and destroys the sub-acid taste so desirable in many fruits; those which are preserved in this manner are chiefly intended for the dessert.

We present the following directions, selected with some trouble, from that excellent but most voluminous work, *Webster's Domestic Economy and House-keeping*, for the benefit of our female readers. We trust they will be found of considerable value to the good housewife at this season of the year:—

In gathering fruit for winter store, great care should be taken not to bruise it, nor to break the skin; the injured parts soon rot and spoil the sound fruit in contact with it. To prevent this, gardeners even have instruments for gathering the most valuable kinds of fruit from the trees, without touching it with the hand. Fruit intended to be stored should never be beat off the trees, or by shaking the branches till it drops, if this can be avoided. They are best gathered on a fine day, when they are most likely to be dry; or if this be done on a wet day, they should be dried in the sun, if possible; the more delicate kinds do not bear to be wiped, as this rubs off their bloom, which, when allowed to dry on some fruits, constitutes a natural varnish, closing up the pores, and preventing the evaporation of the juices.

The usual mode with apples and pears has been to lay them first in heaps for a fortnight or more, covered with mats or straw, to sweat, as it is called; that is, by a very slight fermentation to discharge some of their juice, after which the skin contracts in a slight degree; but this is now generally disapproved of, and it is thought best to carry them at once to the fruit room, where they are laid upon shelves covered with paper, after wiping gently each fruit. The fruit room should be dry and well aired, but should not admit the sun. The finer and larger kinds should not be allowed to touch each other, but should be kept separate; for this purpose, a number of shallow trays should be provided, supported above each other on racks or stands. There should be the means of warming the room in very cold, frosty weather. Some kinds of apples and pears are gathered before they are quite ripe, and the ripening is completed after they are gathered; this is termed the *maturation* of the fruit, and it appears to be a curious and interesting natural process. This subject has been well examined by M. Couverchel in a paper inserted in the "Annales de Chimie." He conceived that the acid and mucilaginous matters of fruit nearly ripe are converted into sugar by a process which is perhaps chemical, and which has been called the saccharine fermentation. Had such fruit remained on the tree until it was quite ripe, this fermentation would soon have passed into the putrefactive stage, and then the fruit could not be preserved without extraordinary means, such as extreme cold, sugar, &c. In general, the apples and pears of autumn should be gathered eight days before they are ripe, and matured in this way, in fact, there are some fruits that are never fit for eating except they are treated in this manner. The principle of life remains in vegetables very differently from what it does in animals; for a branch cut from a tree does not die immediately, but will grow on being planted, into a new tree. Flowers that have been cut off when only buds blow on being placed in water, and the head of a carrot cut off a little below the top of the root, if placed in a shallow

basin of water, will put out leaves, and become a handsome ornament. Mr. Knight is of opinion that, in the case of the maturation of fruit, it still continues to be in a living state though taken from the tree, and that the saccharine matter is formed in the same manner as it would if growing. Pears kept for maturation may be packed carefully with dry moss, bran, or sand dried in an oven, in baskets lined with stout paper; straw is apt to communicate a mouldy taste. They will keep in this way through the winter.

Choice apples and pears are sometimes wrapped singly in paper, and put into glazed jars with covers. When there is no fruit room, a cold cellar may be used, or they may be kept in baskets packed in dry straw, and kept in a dry, cool room.

Oranges and lemons may be preserved a long time wrapped up singly in paper, packed in dry sand or jars, and kept in an equal temperature.

The undried grapes imported from Spain and Portugal furnish us with a fine example of a simple mode of preserving fruit. They come in large jars, having sawdust poured in among the fruit to fill up the jars, and the lids are cemented on to prevent access of air.

It is sometimes safer to take up certain vegetables before hard frosts set in, where the cold is severe, as they may be preserved by artificial means, even by laying on a floor inaccessible to the frost; whereas if left in the ground they would have been frozen and lost. This, in some situations, is the case with cabbages, lettuce, greens, endive, leeks, cauliflowers, &c. They should be carefully removed in dry weather, without injuring the roots too much. Vegetables only a little touched by the frost may be recovered by soaking in cold water.

Carrots and turnips may be preserved through the winter by taking them up and keeping them in pits, or in a dry cellar in sand, secure from frost. The heads and roots should not be cut off.

Onions, when pulled up, should be laid thinly on a gravel walk, and turned every day to dry. When thoroughly dried, they are usually strung together by the tails and hung up in a dry, well-aired place, till wanted for use.

Cabbages are in some places preserved all winter by burying them in the ground, out of the reach of the frost.

Walnuts, filberts, and chestnuts are preserved by drying them; then packing them in jars, boxes, or casks, with fine clean sand that has been well dried before the fire, or they may be buried in a pit in the ground, lined with straw.

Scalding fruit has been employed with success to render their keeping more certain, and is therefore very useful in preparing them for house or sea store.

Some fruits may be preserved in a succulent state by being kept in water without boiling. This is practised with regard to the cranberry; it also succeeds with the smaller kinds of apples.

The method adopted by a Frenchman, M. Appert, of preserving the following Vegetables, is highly approved.—Asparagus.—They are first plunged into boiling water, and then into cold water, to take away their peculiar sharpness. The stalks are placed in the jars with great care, the heads downwards; the jars put into the water-bath until the water boils.

Windsor beans are gathered when small, and put into bottles immediately as the skins turn brown by keeping; one hour in the water-bath. They may also be stripped of their skins if that is preferred.

French Beans.—The pods put into bottles; if very large, cut in pieces; an hour and a half in the water-bath.

Artichokes.—The stools and very few leaves first plunged into boiling, and then into cold water; after draining, they are half dressed by being placed over the fire in a sauce-pan with butter and seasoning herbs. When cold, they are bottled, and placed in the water-bath half an hour.

Carrots, Cabbages, turnips, parsnips, onions, potatoes, celery, cardoons, red beet, and generally all vegetables, may be preserved, either simply scalded or parboiled, put into bottles, and then into the water-bath for an hour.

FINE PICKLED CABBAGE.—An exchange paper gives the following directions for making this excellent and wholesome relish:—"Shred red and white cabbage, spread it in layers in a stone jar, with salt over each layer. Put two spoonfuls of whole black pepper, and the same quantity of allspice, cloves, and cinnamon, in a bag, and scald them in two quarts of vinegar, and pour the vinegar over the cabbage, and cover it tight. Use it two days after."

RECIPE FOR MAKING YEAST.—To two middling sized potatoes add a pint of boiling water, and two table spoonfuls of brown sugar. One pint of hot water should be applied to every half pint of the compound. Hot water is better in warm weather. The yeast being made without flour, will keep longer in hot weather, and is said to be much better than any in previous use. Try it.—*Maine Farmer.*

AN EXCELLENT DISH.—Take of green corn twelve ears, and grate them; to this, add a quart of sweet milk, a quarter of a pound of fresh butter, four eggs, well beaten, pepper and salt, as much as sufficient, stir all well together, and bake four hours in a buttered dish. Some add to the ingredients a quarter of a pound of sugar and eat the pudding with sauce. It is good cold or warm, with meat or sauce, and is one of the most exquisite taste prefer it, we believe, hot, and with the first service.