

THE ONE MAID BOOK OF COOKERY

Eggs must always be fresh, the theory that stale eggs may be used for cooking is both inexplicable and dangerous. An egg held up before a lighted candle should appear clear if fresh. Appearance and smell will tell even the inexperienced when an opened egg is stale.

Butter for all purposes must be pure. Cooking butter, so called, contains a large proportion of water and salt, and often has a very strong and objectionable flavour. An ounce of pure butter gives a better result than an ounce and a half of cooking butter, and the cost is the same. Where a substitute is wanted dripping, lard or any vegetable fat should be used. Butter should be carefully and speedily carried home, and after removing from the paper, should be put into the larder. Butter once softened by the sun or kitchen heat will be greasy and will never harden properly.

Fish rapidly deteriorates. The choice should be of that which is in season and in abundance and consequently in the best condition. A fresh fish is stiff, the skin, eyes and gills are bright, and the smell not unpleasant.

Meat should be most carefully chosen. Where possible a butcher should be selected who uses a glass screen to keep the road dust off the meat; it should be explained to him, where the household is small, that the quantities purchased will be small, but that the best quality only will be required. The eye can be trained to recognise quality in meat by comparing the contents of a first-class shop with those of an inferior one. Beef should be firm, the