

Preserving Meats.

It is curious to watch the widely different methods adopted by different housekeepers for preserving meats for family use. The methods, however, are not more variable than the quality of the meats after they are preserved. Meats may be preserved in a great variety of ways. Beef will keep for an unlimited length of time if pickled in a strong brine made of clear salt and water, but such beef, after a short time, becomes so hard and dry as to be unpalatable to most people. The salt removes all the rich juices of the beef, and leaves it hard, woody, and tasteless.

The secret of keeping beef, hams, or other lean meat in pickle, is to use just as little salt as possible, but enough to prevent decomposition. Sugar is more expensive than salt, but many people use it very freely for making meat pickle, and usually with good results. Pepper and other spices will keep meat from tainting, but too much would spoil it for table use. We are quite partial to the canning methods of keeping meats, but as the work has to be done on a large scale, and by those who are experts at the business, it will be sometime before such meats will wholly supersede the home-cured product. The early winter has been too warm for the best success in preserving meats fresh, many tons of poultry and other meats have been injured or entirely spoiled in the hands of dealers.

For keeping beef perfectly sweet for using fresh, the following method is recommended:—

"Cut the beef in pieces to suit your convenience, expose it where it will freeze very solid, wrap each piece in a separate piece of paper, securing it with twine, and bury in a bin of wheat. If you have no wheat, peas, barley, or any other grain will answer a good purpose. I have kept beef fresh and sweet this way from the first of January to the first of April. I had some beef kept in this way which was better and more tender on the first of April than on the week it was killed."

The only difficulty in following the directions this winter, has been in finding a day cold enough for freezing the meat "very solid."

For preserving beef in pickle, the following method has been adopted by many housekeepers with the best success:—

"To 100 pounds of beef cut in pieces suitable for boiling, add four quarts of salt, four pounds of brown sugar, and four ounces of saltpeter. Sprinkle the mixture over each piece as it is packed, and pound down solid and weight heavily with stones. No water need be added, so there will be enough brine formed from the beef and the other materials. The brine must constantly cover the beef, as the air will soon spoil it."

A Sweet Voice.

There is no power of love so hard to get and keep as a kind voice. A kind hand is deaf and dumb. It may be rough in flesh and blood, yet do the work of a soft heart, and do it with a soft touch. But there is no one thing that love so much needs as a sweet voice to tell what it means and feels; and it is hard to get and keep it in the right tone. One must start in youth, and be on the watch night and day, at work and play, to get and keep a voice that speaks at all times the thoughts of a kind heart. But this is the time when a sharp voice is most apt to be got. You often hear boys and girls say words at play with a quick, sharp tone, as if it were the snap of a whip. When one of them gets vexed you will hear a voice that sounds as if it were made up of a snarl, a whine and a bark. Such a voice often speaks worse than the heart feels. It shows mere ill-will in the tone than in the words. It is often in mirth one gets a voice or a tone that is sharp, and sticks to him through life, and stirs up ill-will and grief, and falls like a drop of gall on the sweet joys at home. Such a sthese get a sharp home-voice for use, and keep their best voice for those they meet elsewhere, just as they would save their best cakes and pies for guests and all their sour food for their own board. I would say to all boys and girls:—"Use your own guest-voice at home. Watch it day by day, as a pearl of great price, for it will be worth more to you in days to come than the best pearl hid in the sea. A kind voice is a joy like a lark's song to hearth and home. It is to the heart what light is to the eye. It is a light that sings as well as shines. Train it to sweet tones now, and it will keep in tune through life."

Doing Up Men's Linen.

Many a husband easy to please in all other respects, has had his weekly grumble over "the way this collar sets," or "how this bosom bulges out!" And many a housewife has tried again and again to remedy these faults. A lady writing to the *New York Evening Post*, explains the difficulty in the following language:—

"Some time ago my husband used to complain that his linen collars did not sit nicely in front. There was always a fullness which, in the case of standing collars, was particularly trying to a man who felt a good deal of pride in the dressing of his neck, as it spoiled the effect of his cravat, and often left a gap for the display of either the collar-band of the shirt or a half-inch of bare skin. While talking with a practical shirtmaker, one day, he mentioned his annoyance, and inquired if there was any means of relieving it. 'Yes,' answered the man, 'the fault lies with your laundress. While doing up your collars she stretches them the wrong way. Damp linen is very pliable, and a good pull will alter a fourteen-inch into a fifteen-inch collar in the twinkling of an eye. She ought to stretch them crosswise, and not lengthwise. Then, in straightening out your shirt bosom she makes another mistake of the same sort. They, also, ought to be pulled crosswise instead of lengthwise, particularly in the neighborhood of the neck. A lengthwise pull draws the front of the neckband up somewhere directly under your chin, where it was never meant to go, and of course that spoils the set of your collar. With the front of your neckband an inch too high, and your collar an inch too long, you have an undesirable combination."

"The speaker was right. As soon as my husband ordered the necessary changes to be made in the methods of our laundry, a wonderful difference manifested itself in the appearance of that most important part of his clad anatomy, the neck. Let me commend the shirtmaker's hint to other distressed women."

Useful Information.

The washerwomen of Holland and Belgium, so proverbially clean, and who get up their linen so beautifully white, use refined borax as a washing powder instead of soda, in the proportion of a large handful of pulverized borax to ten gallons of boiling water. They save in soap one-half. All other large washing establishments adopt the same mode. For laces, cambrics, etc., an extra quantity of the powder is used, and for criolines (required to be made very stiff), a strong solution is necessary. Borax, being a neutral salt, does not in the slightest degree injure the texture of the linen; its effect is to soften the hardest water, and therefore it should be kept on every toilet table. To the taste it is rather sweet, is used for cleaning the hair, is an excellent dentifrice, and in hot countries is used with tartaric acid and bicarbonate of soda as a cooling beverage. Good tea cannot be made from hard water; all water can be made soft by adding a teaspoonful of pulverized borax to an ordinary sized kettle of water, in which it should boil. The saving in the quantity of tea used will be at least one-fifth.—*Scientific American*.

At a happy spot where a number of negroes reside, an old negro was heard calling out to his wife:—"Manda, is you got dem chickens shut up in the smoke house, like I told yer?" "No; an' I like to know what's de matter wid you, dat you's so mighty tickler 'bout dem chicken all at once?" she replied. "Nebber you mind, I know what's the matter, dat's nuff till dem chickens is housed. When I hear dat dem niggers ober dar in de next yard gwine to hab a party, to-morrow night, I wants to be shore dat my chickens doesn't tend it; you hear me?" The chickens were at once locked up.

When wet boots are taken off fill them quite full with dry oats. This grain has great fondness for damp, and will rapidly absorb the least vestige of it from the wet leather. As it quickly and completely takes up the moisture, it swells and fills the boot with a tightly-fitting last, keeping its form good and drying the leather without hardening it.

The best education one can obtain is the education experience gives. In passing through life learn everything you can. It will all come in play.

Life is What we Make it.

Let's oft'ner talk of noble deeds,
And rarer of the bad ones,
And sing about our happy days,
And not about the sad ones.
We were not made to fret and sigh,
And when grief sleeps, to make it;
Bright happiness is standing by—
This life is what we make it.

Let's find the sunny side of men,
Or be believers in it;
A light there is in every soul
That takes the pains to win it.
Oh! there's a slumb'ring good in all,
And we perchance may wake it;
Our hands contain the magic wand—
This life is what we make it.

Then here's to those whose loving hearts
Shed light and joy about them!
Thanks be to them for countless gems
We ne'er had known without them,
Oh! this should be a happy world,
To all who may partake it;
The fault's our own, if it is not—
This life is what we make it.

SCRATCH FROM A CAT.—A scratch from a cat is sometimes not only painful, but difficult to heal. When this is the case, the limb should be bathed with a hot fomentation of camomile and poppy heads, and a hot bread and water poultice applied, to be renewed with the bathing, every four hours.

Notices of Publications Received.

We have received, with other publications, the price list and description of the pure-bred Cotswold sheep, Cotswold-Merino sheep and pure bred Essex pigs, raised by Joseph Harris, Monton Farm, Rochester, N. Y. Mr. Harris is, we believe, the most extensive breeder on this continent of Cotswolds and of Essex pigs, and is both an enterprising and reliable man.

Farm Experiments with Fertilizers, by Prof. Atwater. The recent and continued improvement in agriculture in these days demands a more thorough knowledge of every branch connected with the farm. Scientific as well as practical requirements cannot be separated. Such a work as Prof. Atwater's must meet with hearty welcome by all who are interested in the cultivation of the soil.

The Farmer's Scientific Manual, by T. A. James, Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Georgia, is another of those works on agriculture that are brought out by the requirements of improved agriculture. It is with no little pleasure that we see such unmistakable manifestations of a determination to succeed in the "Sunny South."

We little think of the loss to the country by fire. Many of these might be prevented by due preparation. Many are the work of incendiaries. An American paper says the daily fires throughout the country aggregate a loss, it is estimated, of at least \$50,000,000 a year, which is a dead loss—an actual destruction of value—not a mere transfer of values like that which occurs when a man loses money in an unprofitable speculation. Fires in this country cost us more than taxes, even more than the taxes which European nations levy to support their expensive rulers and costly standing armies. Here, too, our losses from fire are very large, though not as great proportionately as in the States, yet they might be less than they are. At least the losses from incendiaries might be greatly lessened.

We have received from Oliver Ditson & Co., the following very nice selection of music, viz.:—"Duschinka," "Happy Dreamland," "Old Sailor-wife," "Carmen," "Fantasie," "Language of Love," "Overland March," for which kindly accept thanks.