

FOR FARMERS AND GARDENERS.

THE APPLES OF NEW ENGLAND.

BY MRS. M. A. DENISON.

The apples of New England!
How hang their loaded boughs,
Over the gray stone fences,
In reach of the dappled cows;
Of every red cheeked Baldwin,
Hath a merry song to sing
Of some old moss roofed cottage,
Where the farmer is a king.

Yes, king of his bursting acres,
Whose grain takes a thousand hues,
In the wonder-fitting sunshine;—
Yes, king in his cobbled shoes;
King of the sturdy ploughshare;
King of the sickle ke-n;
King over God's full meadows,
Budding in white and green.

The Russets of New England!
What ruddy fires they see
Where the crack of the velny walnut
And the crack of the pine agree—
Where the herbs hang high in the chimney,
And the cat purrs on the hearth,
And the rollicking boys guess riddles,
With many a shout of mirth.

And they hear the fearful stories
That troubled the children's sleep,
Of ghosts seen in the valleys,
And spears on the deep;
And they burst their sides with laughing,
And fling their rich wines round,
Or dance to a cunning piping,
As the corn pops white at a bound.

Of the Sweetings of New England!
Of the old Rhode Island stock—
Brought from the English gardens
To grace the land of rock;
As fair as Briton's daughters,
As hardy as her men;
But fairer lads and lasses
Have plucked their fruit since then.

Of the Pearmain of New England,
With its blended milk and rose,
There's a smell of Albion's orchards
Wherever the good tree grows;
A stout old pilgrim brought it,
And to cradle its seed he broke
The sacred soil of Hartford,
By the roots of the Charter Oak.

Of the Pippins of New England!
What lover's smiles they see,
With their yellow coats, in letters
Tell tales at the apple bee;
What rosy cheeks at the quiltings!
What kisses in the hushing time;
That soon lead off to the parson,
Or end in a wedding chime!

Of the apples of New England!
They are famous in every land,
And they sleep in silver baskets,
Or blush in a jeweled band,
They swell in delicious dreaming
On a beautiful crimson lip,
And taste of the nectared blisses
No lover has dared to sip.

They go to the southern islands,
They go to the western wild,
And they tell of their glorious birth place
To every frolicking child;
Of the home where men are noble,
And women as good as fair—
Of the apples of New England,
They are welcome, everywhere!

THE OPERATIONS of the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, the past year, have been mainly confined to the offer and award of premiums for essays upon agricultural subjects, the importation and dissemination of seeds, the distribution of essays, and the importation of a herd of Ayrshire cattle, for the purpose of improving the dairy stock throughout the State.

The premiums offered for 1859 are—one thousand dollars for a plantation of forest trees; five hundred for the best conducted farm; one hundred and fifty dollars for the best essay on the best breed of cattle.

We notice that there is a general awakening, among the agricultural societies at the East, upon the question as to how shall such societies be rendered most practical in their operations and most useful to the State or community in which they are located.

Will the awarding of a thousand small premiums and diplomas, to five hundred or a thousand different individuals, permanently advance the interests of an agricultural district as much as the same amount expended by judicious, experienced and reliable men, under the immediate direction of the society itself, in importing improved breeds of stock, choice seeds, cuttings, &c? These, when distributed as premiums for a truly worthy and commendable object, would be encouraging to merit and, by the very premium awarded for one year's exertions, continually aid the enterprising farmer to more successfully carry out his designs, at the same time facilitating the attainment of greater perfection in the various branches of his calling.

The American Agriculturist is almost daily re-

ceiving, from officers and committees of agricultural societies, propositions for taking large numbers of copies of that journal, to be awarded as premiums at their next exhibitions. The editor says that "nearly five hundred copies will probably be given by a single society. We are pleased with this fact—not because of any personal advantage, for, as stated last year, copies thus presented are, on the whole, unprofitable; and further, we can not compete with journals got up at less cost in proportion to the subscription price." On this subject, he gives the following excellent suggestions:

"A living premium, extending through a whole year, will do more to awaken and keep up an interest in agricultural improvements, than any money or other premiums, received but once, can possibly do. Multitudes who receive during the year a dozen successive numbers of a good agricultural periodical, will be led to continue reading, and thinking also. We say, then, to those now arranging their premium lists for next fall, try the experiment of giving out a hundred or two subscriptions to some good journal devoted to those interests your Society seeks to promote. You will find them not only satisfactory to recipients, but productive of great good."

Would not a year's subscription to the American Agriculturist—(\$1)—the *Genesee Farmer*—(50 cents)—the *Working Farmer*; *Plow, Loom and Anvil*; *Scientific American*, *Country Gentleman*, *Albany Cultivator*, *Chicago Prairie Farmer*, *California Farmer*, or some other standard agricultural publication, be more acceptable to those who are awarded premiums, than even double the subscription price in cash? But when a comparison is instituted as to the relative good that may accrue to the farmer from the two kinds of premiums, the preference is largely in favor of the agricultural journal—the "living" premium, the information of which, when preserved in a volume, is a source of perpetual benefit.

Agricultural exhibitions are diverted from their true object when, instead of being the means of bringing into notice the results of improved culture, whereby the people are informed and led to adopt the methods most approved, for obtaining fine specimens of stock and produce, they are degenerated into speculative shows or auxiliaries to some private interest.

While it is laudable in all to strive for a premium, it is justly considered honorably complimentary for professional horticulturists to present their choice plants and products labeled "NOT FOR A PREMIUM"—because otherwise the premiums for flowers, rare plants, garden produce, &c., would be almost exclusively monopolized by one, two or three, or half a dozen gardeners who, of course, devoting all their energies to their vocation, would or should be more successful in the cultivation of their grounds than the masses, who are neither supposed to have attained the same degree in agricultural science, nor to have so much time to devote to agricultural labors. Thus, while these may derive benefit from the display of the superior products of the practical, scientific gardener, the premiums, if any, are left to be awarded to them, to stimulate and encourage them (the people generally) to renewed efforts to imitate, if not excel, the gardener himself in aiding the earth to yield in her strength whatever is beautiful and good.

Things that are not Profitable.

To let the manure heap waste away, year after year, instead of applying it to that piece of poor ground which has been only half tilled and constantly cropped until it is well nigh exhausted of its original elements of fertility. That smoking pile of manure is sending into the atmosphere, in the form of gas, the elements which, if mixed with the soil, might be reorganized into food for man and beast. You might as well expect your cow to give a good mess of milk when half fed, or your pig to grow fat on air and water, as for the earth to continue to yield good crops when you constantly draw from it but return it nothing to recruit its strength. In the case of animals the evil results are more apparent, but with the earth they are none the less sure because more gradual.

To attempt to till so much land that it is only half done. The consequence is that not more than half a crop of grain is produced; the other half being sunflowers or other noxious weeds. Reflect a moment. Those weeds, in proportion to the ground they occupy, with the exception of seed, have cost you as much as the grain. For them you have been at the expense of fencing, ploughing, harrowing, and watering, and you cannot well avoid harvesting and thrashing the most of them; then the grain has to be cleaned at extra expense or it is not fit for food for either man or beast.

Neighbor, can't we raise less weeds and more grain on the same ground? That field where the stubble indicates a large growth of sunflowers

can now soon be cleared of the sheaves. If it is too dry to plow, put on the water, then turn it over three or four inches deeper than it was ever plowed before. Leave it in its rough state, that it may have the full benefit of the frosts of winter. Next spring, harrow thoroughly, apply all the manure you can, plow and harrow again—if twice as much the better—and you will find the ground in better condition for a crop than it ever was before, under the old skinning system. At the proper season, plant corn or root crops. Stir the ground often and keep it clear of weeds during the season. Till well for the following crop of wheat, sow clean seed and you may reasonably expect to have grain where you before had weeds.

Think and reflect; study your business; adopt this or some better course, and the earth will oftener yield in strength; you can then ask blessings on your fields with more faith and assurance; your families will be better provided for, your bins better filled to await the time of famine, and you a happier, because a more intelligent man.

Best Mode of Preserving Fruit.

The season for preserving strawberries, gooseberries and other varieties of the earlier fruits is now past; still there are the peaches, the apples, the plums, tomatoes, etc., yet to ripen and opportunities will be had for preserving them in larger or smaller quantities.

With the previous high prices of sugar (65 @ 75c @ lb.) to put up even small supplies of preserves—especially in the old way, allowing a pound of sugar for every pound of fruit—was incurring an expense which but few persons cared to incur. Nor would more reduced prices, in our estimation, furnish good grounds for resorting to the old method of preserving fruits, when a method cheaper and better in every respect presents itself. We have heard the expression, "Our mother made preserves so and so, and there can be no better way." Such persons, as a matter of course, have the right to follow in the footsteps of their mothers and grandmothers; nor is it likely that they alone will ever turn the world right side up. They are old fogies, whether masculine or feminine.

Is it not written that "all our fathers [and mothers] have inherited lies and vanity, and things wherein there is no profit?"—That is, they made peach preserves out of sugar and peaches, boiled to such a state that the peach, so far from being preserved, entirely lost its identity and became no more peach, but a pulpy receptacle for clarified syrup.

The American Agriculturist for July contains the following remarks and directions for putting up fruit and preserving it fresh, and as nearly as possible in its natural state, as to flavor and appearance:

Our long-time readers know that we have utterly condemned, as unfit for human food, the old-style "preserves." We have for several years tried to inculcate the fact that there is less risk of loss, less trouble, and less expense, in preserving fruits fresh, or nearly in their natural state, than in stewing them down with sugar to a keeping condition; while by the newer process they are vastly more healthful and more palatable. What we have recommended to others we have ourselves practiced with entire success and satisfaction. We are at this season constantly using the various smaller and larger fruits little altered from their condition when first gathered. The main thing is to put up the fruit freed from air, and then keep them from its contact.

Formerly we depended almost wholly upon what are called air-tight self-sealing tin cans. These have proved satisfactory, though there has always been the objection that with acid fruits, or when the closing has not been entirely perfect, there is apt to be a little corrosion of the tin, and a slight liability of the articles becoming colored or flavored with the salts of tin thus formed. With proper experience and care in putting up, there is no trouble in this respect especially with the less acid (or sour) fruits. We shall continue the use of at least a part of the tin cans we have, and, by the way some which have been used three years are yet very good.

We have found the style of tin can manufactured by Mr. Lockwood, of Stamford, quite convenient. These are closed at the top with a little tin cup, into which cold water is poured for cooling the wax, and warm water for loosening it when removing the fruit. Some improvements in the top of the can are promised for this season.

Everything considered, we think glass or well glazed earthenware preferable in all cases, or especially for sour fruits—for rhubarb (pie-plant), tomatoes and the like, provided convenient vessels could be prepared. We have suggested several plans from time to time to glass manufacturers, but until this year have been unable to get just those we have desired to be of the best form.

Last year we tried common glass bottles with wide necks, flaring at the top, stopped with corks, and covered with cloth dipped in a preparation of one ounce of tallow melted with one pound of resin. These succeeded very well. We have peaches, strawberries, cherries, rhubarb, etc., now in good order. The glass is not corroded, of course, and the fruit looks better in the transparent bottles. We have this year procured a lot of Yeoman's fruit bottles, which are in just the form we recommended two years since, and tried to get manufactured but without success.

The accompanying figure shows the form. It is similar

to an ordinary wide-necked bottle, but the neck is provided with a shoulder on the inside for the cork to rest upon. When filled, the close fitting flat cork is pressed in down to the shoulder, leaving room above it for a thin layer of wax or cement to be poured in. For convenience of removing the cork, it is well to lay two strings, crossing each other at right angles, upon the top of the bottle and put the cork upon these when pushing it down; or better still, tie the two strings loosely around the cork and these will serve as a handle for drawing it out with a hook or bent wire.



We have generally used common bees-wax for sealing both glass bottles and cans. A better preparation and a cheaper one, is made by melting and stirring well together very nearly one ounce of tallow to a pound of resin—or say one ounce of tallow to seventeen ounces of resin.

When glass bottles of any kind are used they should be set into a wash boiler or any convenient vessel, and cold water poured around them up to the necks; they will need a cover or weight to keep them down. Heat the water to near the boiling point. This gradually heats the glass and prevents breaking when hot fruits are put in.

MODE OF PUTTING UP FRUITS.

The fruits, of whatever kind, should be taken as nearly as possible fresh picked, and at just the ripening point—not over ripe, nor in the least stale.

BERRIES.—For strawberries, blackberries, and raspberries, take the clean dry fruit, avoiding washing unless really necessary; fill the cans or heated jars full, then fill the spaces between the berries with hot syrup. We formerly made the syrup by boiling, and skimming, one pound of good white sugar with one pint of water. Refined sugar is best. Last year we used for experiment from 1-2 to 3-4 lb. of sugar to the pint. The fruit kept well. A good rule is, to use about as much sugar for the different fruits as will be required to fit them for eating—rather more is required where the fruit is to become saturated by long standing in the jars or cans, than when to be immediately used. A small amount of syrup will fill up the spaces between the fruits.

Let the jars or cans stand surrounded with hot water, say ten or fifteen minutes, until all bubbles of air have escaped. Then take from one jar enough fruit, and syrup enough to fill the others just up to the cork or cover. The covers may then be put on to tin cans and when removed from the water and wiped dry around the top, put on beeswax, or the above cement, enough to perfectly close every possible aperture. For glass jars, wipe the neck and shoulders dry, down to the fruit; dip the corks into the melted cement and press them down to the shoulder, with the strings around them as already noted. Next pour melted cement over the top of the corks. Mr. Yeoman says it is enough to simply dip the neck of the bottle into the cement. We would prefer filling the small space above the cork entirely with cement, as it is cheap, and this will more certainly prevent openings by air-bubbles, or cracking. The jars, thus easily filled, may then be set aside to cool, and afterwards be stored in any convenient place—in a chamber, closet, or pantry, or in a cellar. The fruit will come out nice and fresh at the end of six months or a year. The condition of fruit can be readily examined from time to time—this is a decided advantage of the glass jars—and should there chance to be any fermentation visible, such fruit may be used.

PEACHES, CHERRIES, PLUMS, APRICOTS, PEARS, QUINCES, APPLES, ETC., may all be put up in the same manner. Apples and quinces, of course, require to have the cores removed. They may be cut into pieces of desired size and form. The pits should be removed from peaches, and cherries are all the better for being first stoned, besides the advantage of getting more fruit into a can. It is better with all these fruits, except peaches, to cook them in a separate kettle for five or ten minutes, and afterwards dip them into the heated jars. The main object of heating is to expel the enclosed air. A little heating after putting into the jars perfects the removal of the air. The cooking should never be carried far enough to discolor and soften the outside of the fruit. Apples may be stewed into sauce ready for the table, then sealed up in the cans ready to be used whenever desired—three, six, nine, or twelve months afterwards. We have put up a large quantity thus, at different periods of the year—in the winter taking jars that had previously been used for the same purpose or for other fruits. All kinds of stewed sauce may be seasoned, then bottled and sealed, and be always ready for use.

TOMATOES we put up largely every year, and have now (June) a fair supply, as good as if just gathered and cooked. These we skin, cut, and boil down one-half, and then bottle up. Prepared in this way they are so convenient, and of so good and fresh quality that we make no special effort to secure early new tomatoes.

RHUBARB, stewed soft, sweetened as for pies, and bottled, comes out nice and fresh in mid-winter or spring.

CURRENTS and gooseberries are also similarly kept, but these should be mature, not necessarily ripe, and be well cooked and sweetened with a strong syrup.

GREEN PEAS, BEANS and **CORN** may also be kept, but they need to be thoroughly cooked before bottling, or they are liable to spoil.

We repeat in closing, that, though we have made a long chapter in giving particulars, the process of putting up in bottles and cans we find to be less trouble and labor than the old fashioned mode of "preserving" in sugar, while less sugar is required, and a sweet-meat or sauce is thus obtained, far superior in appearance, in taste, and especially in healthfulness.

The cut to represent the improved preserve jar we have here introduced, that, if they please, our potters may manufacture some after the same model. Though glass is most preferable, we can get along very well with the earthenware jars, if thoroughly glazed, as we have seen some of the wares from our Danish pottery in the 2d Ward.

Besides retaining the freshness and peculiar