

Buttermilk.

Among the many evidences of extravagance in wasting our food resources there are few, says the *Provisioner*, more striking than the waste of milk. Any one who has lived in Lancashire or traveled in Ireland or in Scotland, and has noted the life and characteristic food of the farmers, of the peasantry, and of the working classes, will know how pleasant and acceptable a drink is buttermilk. On the first day, a thin and semi-acidulous beverage, clean to the palate, refreshing and full of nourishment; on the second day, thicker and richer, and more nearly resembling the familiar curds and whey which are among the luxuries of cookneys, but with the curd broken into fine particles, and therefore less cloying and more digestible. The waste of buttermilk in this country is humiliating and painful to think of. It needs no scientific authority to say how nourishing it is, how full of digestible albumen and animalized salt. Half a pint of buttermilk contains as much nutriment, and is as sustaining a beverage, as many gallons of beer. No doubt the taste for it is one that depends upon habit. To a Mecklenburg palate, for example, the preference for fresh milk over buttermilk would often be surprising; and it is quite certain that a taste for buttermilk would be much more easily acquired, and is much more natural, than the taste for claret or bitter ale. It is a mere matter of habit and of prejudice; and that being so, it is not a little surprising to reflect that hundreds of thousands of gallons of buttermilk are thrown to the pigs, from the sheer prejudice that it is not fit for human food, and from the indolence of those who will not take the trouble to acquire the taste for it. A few days since one gentleman offered to supply a thousand gallons of buttermilk a day for use in London; fresh daily, at a rate which would allow of its being sold at a halfpenny the large tumbler, and yield a profit of one hundred per cent. to the retailer. It might be well worth the trouble of some one who deals with large numbers of men to endeavor to cultivate the taste for buttermilk among them, and to save these gallons of excellent food from being thrown to the pigs. If any demand could be cultivated for it, no doubt the managers of coffee taverns and coffee palaces would be glad to undertake the sale of it. It would yield them a large profit, and might with some trouble be revived as the National drink. Buttermilk need not by any means be considered as especially a drink for the poor; as a nursery substitute for the milk and water with which children are largely fed, it would be more economical and infinitely more nourishing; nor can there be any doubt, as indeed it is not a matter of theory to assert, that children of any rank quickly learn to like it better than anything else that can be offered them.

A Screen for the Back Door.

It is often desirable to shut off a view of the back door and its surroundings by a screen, so that the inmates may pass to the dairy house, wood shed, and other out-buildings unnoticed by passers along the highway, and others. A screen of lattice-work answers very well, and one made with thin slats crossing one another, and so painted as not to be conspicuous, will present a neat appearance and be serviceable. But such a screen of itself attracts attention, and is too artificial for a country home. A screen may be made of evergreens, set in a straight line to form a tall hedge. Or, where the land can be afforded, they may be set in two lines to form a broad belt, the trees in one row being opposite the intervals in the next. This makes, perhaps, the best of living screens, but they are somewhat slow in growth, and take up considerable space. Still, the Norway Spruce, the tree on the whole best suited to the purpose, will soon become large enough, and some temporary screen may be used in the meanwhile. If these trees are set in a single line, place them six feet apart, but if in two lines, they may be ten feet apart. A screen that is both serviceable and agreeable to the eye, may be made by setting posts as high as desired, along the line of the screen, and connect the top of these posts by a cap-board. Below this cap stretch a number of wires, and the frame work of the screen is complete. Plant along the screen every six or eight feet, quick-growing grape vines. The Clinton or Taylor are the most useful for foliage, though the Concord will grow fast enough, and give an abundance of fruit besides. Until the grape vines are large enough, annuals, such as morning-glories, may be sown, or some roots of the Madeira vine planted. In three years, at the most, the grape-vine screen will be complete. The vines should be trained with a view to cover the screen with foliage.—*American Agriculturist*.

Country Road-Making.

It needs no argument to prove to thinking people that good roads pay. But it is also evident that there is a lack of good roads, especially in the country. This is due largely to ignorance and want of public interest. As this is the time of the year when overseers are receiving their appointment and beginning to spend the people's money, it is a good time to consider the subject.

A good system helps very much in securing good roads. The old way of having short road districts, an overseer for each, and depending upon property-owners to work out their road-tax at their convenience, is not suited to thickly-settled regions. Having seen the working of a system somewhat similar to the one I am about to suggest, I commend it to the attention of those

who desire good roads. Where the work is not done by contract, let each township be a district by itself. At the annual town meeting a Board of Highway Commissioners should be elected who should employ as road-master, upon a fair salary, a good practical man, who has some knowledge of surveying and engineering. Furnish him with one or two yokes of oxen, one or two pairs of horses with wagons, carts, ploughs, scrapers, and small tools, and money to hire steadily through the summer eight or ten men, and perhaps four through the winter. His business should be to study road-making, learn where the best materials are to be had, and, in short, to give the people, as soon as possible, good roads all over the township. This system has two advantages over the old way: 1. It would put the road-making in the hands of a few competent men who would make it their business; 2. The hired men, not having other interests to look after, would work the roads at the proper season of the year, and, being engaged constantly, would become expert, and accomplish much more than green hands.

A good road should be hard, smooth, well-graded, free from stone and sandy stretches, sufficiently wide for two carriages to be driven abreast without interfering, and having on either side a ditch to carry off the water, and a sidewalk for pedestrians. As a rule, main roads leading to centers of trade should be straight, and macadamized in the center. In suburban districts, where the land is rolling, and where rural beauty and not utility alone is the aim, serpentine roads are preferable, so made as to avoid the hills and marshes, and to develop good building sites. A good road to be pleasant and attractive should also have on either side rows of shade-trees. The untraveled parts should be cleared of stones, briars and weeds, leveled and sown with grass-seed. When water from a spring can be led to the side of a road, a water-trough and cup should be provided for the refreshment of man and beast. Brooks and streams which the road crosses should have wide, substantial bridges, and a good wagon passage through the water on one side. Weeping willows around the water's edge, and ivy vines clambering over the stones of the bridge, give an added charm. Grade-boards or large stones at the intersections of roads, painted with directions as to the way, often save much anxiety and many unnecessary steps.

The best time of the year to build new roads is in the spring or early summer. The ground is then loose and easily handled, and when the work is completed it has time to settle before winter. When laying out a new road, or beginning to repair an old one, it is good economy to employ an engineer or other competent person to fix the course, the proper grade, the direction for the water to run, the width of wagon-bed and sidewalk. When once these are wisely fixed they should be rigidly adhered to. The road-bed should have a convex form, twenty inches to two feet in the center above the bottom of the ditches. Low lands and bad places should receive attention first. It is often best not to turnpike the hills, but dig out the ditches and cart the soil down on to the low land. This helps the grade, and the mixture of soils, especially if one is sandy or gravelly, is beneficial. Level off the dirt with hoe or shovel before harrowing and pick up all small stones. Do not throw the stones on the sidewalk, but cart to a miry place which it is intended to macadamize. Underdrain low, wet, springy places, laying the tile under the wagon track, with a free outlet for the water at the side of the road. Black muck, wash from the road which is largely mixed with the droppings of animals and vegetable mold are not good materials, and should be covered up or carted away to give place to clayey subsoil, sand, gravel and fine broken stone. These make a firmer bed, and do not so easily work up into a blinding dust. Putting stone in ruts and holes, or thin macadamizing, unless the stone is broken very fine, is unwise. The frost, rain and wheels soon displace them, and then the road becomes rough and unpleasant the year around, painful to horses, wearing to wagons and torturing to all travelers. Water-bars should be made on the hill-sides. A road-plane or scraper is a very serviceable implement, and should be used more freely, especially in the spring and summer, to smooth the roads and fill up ruts and holes where water is likely to stand. The winter work for the men consists in carting and breaking stone for macadamizing, and the carting of gravel for dressing the roads. Had we such roads as we might and ought to have, there would be less complaint about living in the country.—*Dennis C. Crane, in Examiner and Chronicle*.

Cotton-seed oil factories are springing up everywhere in Texas—Dallas, Brenham, Galveston, etc. Both oil and oil-cake is shipped directly to Europe—the oil-cake to feed to stock in Europe and the oil to be refined and sent back as the purest table olive oil. Heretofore our olive oil has been mostly made from North Carolina peanuts, which have been shipped to Marseilles, France. The cotton seed scheme is going to destroy entirely the pure olive-oil industry in Europe, and materially hurt the peanut-oil industry in North Carolina and Tennessee.

A Connecticut Yankee has laboriously constructed a model of the home of Washington, and rides in a wagon of unique style from town to town exhibiting Mount Vernon to school-children at five cents a head. He says he is "seeing the country."

One of the Mysteries.

Said Brother Gardner to the Limekiln Club:

"When a man axes me who libs nex' doah, I answer him Brown, or Jones, or White, or whatever de name may be; but when he goes beyond dat, an' axes what salary de man ains, how often his wife changes bonnets an' how day make seben dollars a week go furder dan I kin fo'teen, I become a clam. I has no business to know, an' when I do know I won't tell. I used to have some curiosity in dis direcshun, but I has got ober it of late y'ars. When I know dat a sartin man, receivin' a salary of twelve dollars per week, kin give parties, hire carriages an' dress his wife in silks it makes me glum. Dat is, it used to. I used to wonder why I couldn't do de same thing on de same money, but I nebber could. When de ole woman used to tell me dat sartin woman had new silks, new hats, new close an' new shoes once a month de y'ar roun', an' we habin' to live clus on de same money, it made me mad. Dat is, it used to. When I saw men who owed for deir washin' struttin' aroun' like lords while I had to work seben days in a week an' pay my debts, I felt like smashin' frew de sidewalk. But I has got ober all dis. When I meet a woman who kin dress like a banker's wife on de ten dollars or twelve dollars per week paid her husband, I doan' low myself to eben flunk about it. When I see a man bu' twenty-cent cigars, sportin' a cane and takin' champagne, while his chillen at home an' bar'fut, I try to believe dat it am all right. When a lady wid \$300 worf of close on axes me to do a job of whitewashin' in a parlor whar' de bes' pictur's come from a tea store an' de bes' chair am under chattel mortgage, I doan' stop to wonder who she thinks she am foolin'. Naybers ob mine who owe all de butcher's widin a circle of a mile kin pay fo' dollars cash for a libery rig on Sunday, an' I shan' criticize. Wives may go shoppin' ebry day in de week an' gin parties ebry night, an' my ole woman will keep de cabin just de same. Since we quit wonderin' an' speculatin' ober dese things we feel much better. We know for a fact just how fur we kin make money go. If odder folks kin lib like lords on a salary of \$600 a y'ar it's a streak of good luck an' none of our bizness. My advice to you am to let sich flings pass. Dey are mysteries wid which we have no bizness, an' de mo' you ponder ober dem de less you will enjoy what you have honestly earned by hard work an' saved by good economy."—*Detroit Free Press*.

Do Birds Bury Their Dead?

You are all familiar with the story of "The Babes in the Wood," and remember how the robins, finding the babes lying dead, side by side, covered their little forms with leaves, wrapping them in a winding sheet of nature's own providing.

Did you ever ask the question, Do birds bury their own dead?

Let me tell you an incident that came from an eye-witness of what I relate.

In a tree near an old-fashioned farmhouse, way up in Vermont, two robins built their nest. A lady watched them day by day as they brought straws, a bit of cotton, or thread, and weaved them dextrously, to form their summer home. One morning she found three blue speckled eggs in the nest, and on another, three tiny little birds in their place. How busy the father and mother birds were, providing for their wants! and how prettily and tenderly they cared for them!

When they were large enough they gave them lessons in flying, and herein comes the point of my story. While they were trying their wings one day, a cat caught one, and before the lady could rescue it, it was injured beyond recovery. She put the poor trembling little creature back in its nest and left it there for the mother-bird to nurse back to life, if possible.

It was of no use. The cat's cruel claws and sharp teeth had done their work, and their victim died. A few days after the lady, seeing and hearing nothing of the other birds, went to the nest, and found that they had built a thatched roof over the poor little bird, and there he lay on his back, with his claws sticking up through the straws. They had buried their dead, and deserted the nest.—*Youth's Companion*.

Charming Girls.

Perfect cleanliness is itself a potent charm. The most bewitching combination of features ever seen since Helen of Troy bloomed upon Menelaus would be spoiled by ill-kept teeth. Beautiful teeth alone give attractiveness to many a face.

The appearance of good health is extremely attractive; and most girls can have that charm if they will faithfully try to obtain it. But there is still another grace which wins hearts, and keeps them, too, and that is the grace of good temper.

A young lady who is suitably dressed, who has good teeth in good condition, who enjoys blooming health, and who possesses a cheery, kind disposition, need not worry herself about the shape of her nose, or the color of her hair. These she cannot control. The other charms we have mentioned, which are worth all other personal attractions put together, are generally within the reach of those girls who know how to live.

Good habits, good thoughts, good deeds—these write their record upon the human countenance and make it lovely with an enduring loveliness that time cannot efface.—*Youth's Companion*.

Cesare Cantu, the greatest living Italian historian, is ninety-two, but at times appears as young and active as one of half his years.

Our Young Readers.

A HERO.

Mamma closed her book as the eve grew dim:
"Twas a beautiful story, too—
About a Captain who gave his life,
In a storm, to save his crew."

Her little boy sat on her knee, and thought
Of the tale she just had read:
Then, lifting his eyes to his mother's face,
"What is a hero?" he said.

"Is he always, I wonder, a great, strong man?
Does one ever come to this town?"
Then mamma softly bends, and strokes
The curls of chestnut-brown.

"A little boy, like you, can be
A hero brave and true,
Fighting, not giants, but faults, my pet—
Willing to dare and do."

"In days of old, brave men were called
By the good name of 'knight';
They helped the weak, and ever fought
For justice, truth and right."

"All heroes that the world has known
Once were but boys who tried
To lead a noble life, and leave
A grand name when they died."

"The bravest hero, dear little one,
May never in far lands roam,
Or do great deeds; but every boy
Can be a hero at home!"

—*Golden Days*.

GOING TO SEA.

I have lately had a letter from my nephew, Johnny Briggs. As the spelling and grammar are a little defective, I will only give the postscripts, which, however, contain the pith of the letter itself. They run thus:

"P. s. on Reason I have deeyid to go to see, is because I am so fond of Fun and adventure."
"P. s. s. can I rize quickist in the navy or by going in the Merchant Service?"
JOHNNY BRIGGS."

It is a great many years since I was a boy like Johnny—a great many; yet not so long ago but that, after reading his letter and his postscripts, I fully understand Johnny's frame of mind. He is tired of the sameness of life—the eating and sleeping and going to school are all so uneventful. There are no pirates, or wild Indians, or typhoons to be encountered in this prosaic existence, no fair young maidens to be rescued from peril of field, fire or flood. His ardent soul pants for adventure, and he is aflame to encounter the excitement which he fondly believes to be inseparable from

"A life on the ocean wave."

According to his letter, this new-born desire is due to "an unquenchable Spirit of Roving," which he darkly hints is an inheritance from a very remote ancestor, who is mentioned by Johnny as a "freebooter." My own impression, however, is that it arises from the fact that the news-dealer at the corner of the block where Johnny lives deals in five-cent nautical novels of the most startling kind. I saw one of them once. It was called "The Boy Blockader, or, The Strange Secret of Hampton Hall." I was interested to notice that the publishers announced it as of thrilling interest, and intended especially for the instruction and edification of youth! All for five cents! But I am wandering from my subject.

Now Johnny has asked my advice on this matter of going to sea. True, I know that, like advice asking people in general, he will only take so much of it as coincides with his own ideas—the remainder will be contemptuously ignored as the views of an old fogy. But Duty with a big D stands at my elbow, so out of my past experience I have evolved the following:

MY DEAR NEPHEW:—"The Burlington Hawk-eye man, who is one of the most charming persons I know, says this: 'Everybody likes a candid man till he gives a candid opinion that inter-feres with their own. Then he's a bigot.' So before I finish this letter you'll know what a bigot is, and that will be something."

"Your fondness for fame and adventure is—if I may so express it—a family weakness. It sent your father to California in '49, and brought him home with rather less money than he took away with him. Me it sent to sea; and if I learned nothing else there, I found out that present-day sea-going hasn't quite as much fun or adventure about it as present-day sea-stories would have us believe. If you, my dear Johnny, should go to sea, you would probably make the same discovery. I doubt even if you would find among your shipmates a daring Dick Dashaway, a romantic Ralph Rackstraw, or even a jolly Jack Easy. The men who have taken the place of these heroes of fiction are literally on earth, earthly, rather than of the sea, salt. I don't know just why the salt should have so lost its savor since the days of Cooper and Marryatt. But one would think now-a-days that it was henceforth fit for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men, such a downtrodden race are the sailors of to-day."

"For you will no longer, my dear Johnny, find the jovial tar who in the words of your favorite song,
"Sings as he blows the gathering cloud,"
to be the manly, independent mariner of fiction. Rather is he (literally, oftentimes) under the iron heel of a brutal taskmaster."

"I have never heard heard him sing as he viewed the gathering cloud, though I have heard him, under his breath, use unpleasantly emphatic words on the subject of the weather. And my impression is, my dear nephew, that after you have been to sea a short time, you yourself will not look upon the gathering cloud in the light of a subject for tuneful melody; because when a man is called out of his watch below to help shorten sail four or five times every twenty-four hours, he is apt to lose his ear for music."

"Why, the summons to this unpleasant duty is of itself calculated to make a boy think of home. The officer of

the deck does not send word for ard that as the weather is likely to be unpleasant he would be obliged to the sailors if he would kindly arse and appear on deck as soon as they can conveniently. Oh, no! But the second mate, who is muscular of arm and powerful of voice, thunders away at the forecastle door, shouting in a tone that doesn't admit of discuss on:
"Turn out here to short'n sail; and be quick about it, too!"

"I may remark in passing, my dear John, that it will at such a time be useless for you to plead fatigue, drowsiness or even a sudden headache, as an excuse for not obeying, or even to remark that you'll be up 'directly.' I should not care to be in your sea-boots if you did."

"But by the time you are drenched with the driving rain and flying spray, have plunged frantically into the lee scuppers and been requested with more emphasis than courtesy to get aloft on the topsail yard, you will forget your drowsiness. For it will be all you can do to cling to the yard with your elbows while your feet are balanced on the slippery, swaying foot-ropes and your numbed fingers clutching at the slatting canvas which seems trying to knock you from your perch."

"But, I hear you say quite scornfully, 'it isn't always storming on the ocean.' And I have no doubt but that you picture yourself, arrayed like a 'Pinafore' sailor, leaning idly against the rail as the ship glides smoothly onward before the steady trade-winds over some sparkling tropical sea; which I confess is a charming picture, my dear nephew, the drawback being that it is as unlike the reality as a ten-cent 'chromo' is unlike a photographic negative."

"In certain latitudes there are summer seas and skies for days at a time. Were it not so, my dear boy, the unpleasant and endless jobs of tarring and greasing, and splicing and mending, and scrubbing and painting, and scraping and oiling, which are always going on on shipboard but never finished, would have to be done in bad weather instead of fine. For the good Captain and his kind-hearted officers not only mean that you shall have no time to 'mope' or be homesick in, but they bear in mind the beautiful suggestion of Dr. Watts, that

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

So that you will find every moment spent on deck is filled and running over into the next one with tasks of every conceivable kind—tasks which are invariably connected with clinging tar and odorous grease—tasks which will take you from the keelson to the royal truck a dozen times in a day.

"True, should the Sabbath prove exceptionally fine, you may have time to read a chapter in your Bible, though such rare occasions are generally occupied by sailors in the necessary duties of patching and mending."

"So, my dear Johnny, in summing the matter up, I have to tell you frankly that going to sea before the mast does not give the boy the chance to gratify the love for fun and adventure of which he fondly dreams. True, being drenched in a typhoon or wrecked on a lee shore may savor of adventure, but even these exciting episodes have some very unpleasant features—so unpleasant, in fact, that it not infrequently happens to the participant in them that he never returns home to relate such adventures."

"And finally, as to rising in the naval or merchant service, that, my dear nephew, depends. If you have an iron constitution, gutta-percha joints, and perfectly tempered steel springs all over your body; if you have a quick mind to take in both the practice and theory of seamanship; if you have a never-tiring energy, which can cause such body and such mind to be in the perpetual motion, and if you have enough of the yeast of ambition about you to keep the whole in a sort of unceasing ferment—why then, in the course of time, you may rise in either branch of the service. But you will never rise above hard work, exposure, anxiety and responsibility, even if you are elevated to the quarter-deck. In conclusion, my dear Johnny, my own impression is that, generally speaking, you will find the best part of sea-going to consist in staying at home and reading truthful accounts of the sailing experiences of others."—*Frank H. Converse, in Christian Union*.

Foxes That Need Chaining.

A fox that had been caught young was kept chained in a yard, and became so tame that fowls and geese approached it without fear.

"Pretty thing!" said its mistress. "It does no harm. It is cruel to keep it chained."

So she unbuckled its collar and let it run about. Scarcely, however, had she turned her back, than she heard a great clucking from her poultry. Looking around, she saw the fox scampering off with her plump red pullet thrown over his shoulder.

"You treacherous, ungrateful little villain!" cried the woman, "and I thought you were so good."

"So I was, mistress," answered the fox, "as long as I was chained."

There are many little foxes that need chaining. There is the "put off studying your lessons to the last minute," for that runs off with your good marks at school; Master Reynard "speaking without thinking," which is always getting its owner into trouble; and Sly-boots "nobody will see you do it." Chain them up! that's the only way to manage them.—*Kind Words*.

The fence between the Bemister and Grace farms, near Utica, N. Y., is the subject of a lawsuit. The ground involved is worth about three dollars, and, thus far, three thousand dollars have been spent in litigation.