

POLLY MAKING TOAST.

When wintry winds pipe loudest tones
And round the chimney cry,
And twilight brings me tender thoughts
Of all the years gone by,
Among the pictures of the past
That come in thronging host
The fairest mirrored in the fire
Is Polly making toast.

My Polly! Bless her! There she kneels
Before the andirons tall,
Whose shining gold reflects the sparks
Of embers as they fall.
The children have put apples down
Upon the hearth to roast
And Polly turns them when she stoops
To brown the fragrant toast.

One hand is held to shield her cheek,
So near the backlog's heat,
And one's outstretched before the coals;
Her watchful eyes are sweet.
Outside the boys adown the hill
Are shouting as they coast;
The pussy purrs, the kettle sings,
While Polly makes the toast.

Just by that hearthside's warmth and light
Lies all the dearest part
Of strength and love and joy of life.
My lonely, eager heart
The quaint old farmhouse kitchen seeks,
That picture charms me most,
Where Polly by the chimney fire
Beside me makes the toast.

Now blessings on the wintry winds
That hush their voices strong
To sing sometimes of memories
Or chant a true love's song.
And blessings on remembered scenes
That pass in countless host!
Best blessings on the one that shows
My Polly making toast!

—MARY FRENCH MORTON.

In Twentieth Century Farmer.

POOR MAN'S BUTTER. The cost of producing a pound of oleomargarine is from 11 to 13 cents.

Add to this the tax of 10 cents and the colored product will cost at the factory, from 21 to 23 cents, and after passing through various hands, will be sold over the retailer's counter at a price considerably beyond the means of the average laborer.

Producers of high-grade butter—in other words, dairymen, who do an honest business—need have no fear that butterine will ever compete with their product; in fact it enhances the value of the pure product because a generous amount of the very best butter is used in the manufacture of oleo. The competition is between the product of the butterine maker's art and the rancid, offensive, germ-breeding process butter, which not long since was the only fat which graced, or disgraced the poor man's board. The laws of health and the laws of common sense unite in recommending the substitute as the superior article in flavor, nutritive qualities and hygienic composition.

Those who are disappointed at the recent action of congress, need not feel utterly discouraged. It took the world

hundreds of years to learn to use even the very choicest grades of butter for any other purpose than as an ointment for the body after bathing; and, while blind prejudice and selfish hostility may combine to retard the forward movement, oleomargarine will no doubt eventually take its proper place among the wholesome and palatable foods.

The hearts of all true Americans go out in sympathy to poor Venezuela struggling in the throes of a devastating civil war. In the very latest engagement the brilliant strategy of General Matos, and the unparalleled devotion and courage of the army under his command resulted, after a hard day's fighting, in the infliction of two ghastly wounds in the sombrero of the opposing officer. This signal success created a sensation at Caracas, "where great consequent commotion prevails;" it also taught the world that the war is no farce but a grim determined struggle for supremacy. War! war! to the hat-brim!

The people of this country await in breathless horror the tidings from the next awful field, for who can draw aside the curtain which hides the destinies of nations and say that in the next encounter some Venezuelan may receive three, or even four, gaping wounds in his head-gear, or, worse yet, lose his cravat? Horrible! Horrible!

NEBRASKA APPLES.

Mr. E. F. Stephens, of Crete, Nebraska, has duly received the bronze

medal awarded him for his display of apples at the Paris Exposition. On one side is inscribed, "Exposition Universelle Internationale, 1900, E. F. Stephens," and on the other, "Republique Francaise."

This hard-earned honor, no doubt justly conferred, gives notice to the world that the real "land of the big red apple" is bounded on the north by South Dakota, on the east by Iowa and Missouri, on the south by Kansas, on the west by Colorado and Wyoming.

The dairyman who **OVER-REACHED.** champed so impatiently for a race with the butterine maker has had his whirl and won the heat, but has sadly over-reached.

In his tearful plea from protection from competitors, he went to such length, asked so earnestly that the public stomach be protected, that, in order to test his sincerity, an amendment providing for the inspection of all process butter—the only real competitor of oleo—was offered in the house and duly

adopted. Right there is where the dairyman stepped on his own halter-rope and caught a nasty fall. The action so far, taken as a whole, is probably more of a hindrance than a help to the dairyman, which is only a repetition of the old, old story of greed over-reaching itself.

NOTES FROM MEXICO.

Mexican Mines.

There is now, and, there promises to be, great development in mines in Mexico. American capital, intelligence, and industry threaten to establish a mining boom in that republic that will startle the world. A very prominent mining engineer — one who has frequently represented the Rothschilds — recently made the statement that in his opinion Mexico would make the mineral wealth of South Africa look very small within the next few years. It is the opinion of the Conservative that there is to be a great production of gold in Mexico and with it may come a gold standard, although the miners, manufacturers and others who employ labor prefer the silver basis for reasons which are patent.

Chihuahua, Mexico.

Americans visiting this enterprising Mexican city, the capital of the state of Chihuahua, are surprised at its activity. On every hand is seen evidence of growth and development—new factories, new houses, and new mines of fabulous wealth coupled with a surrounding country which is equal, if not superior to, any other in the world for cattle-raising, is sure to make Chihuahua one of the most important cities of Mexico. The many indications of wealth all go to show the prosperous condition of the better class of residents, although there seems to be little but adversity for the peons or common people, and yet they seem happy and contented. The climate during the winter months is superb.

Aguas Calientes.

Pronounced Ah-was Calients, is a progressive town in Central Mexico, and is noted for its hot baths. The Mexican Central railroad has selected this point as the location for their principal shops, and quite a boom is anticipated on this account. It is at this place that most of the fine Mexican drawn-work is made, some of which is exquisite in design and marvelous in workmanship.

Aguas Calientes possesses one of the largest smelters in the world, owned and operated by the Guggerheims, who now control the American Smelting and Refining Company.

It is well worth a visit by Americans, and is a very interesting city.