

## THE BEST VEGETABLES.

MANY SUPERIOR VARIETIES PALMED OFF  
ON THE PUBLIC, WHICH MIGHT  
HAVE THE BEST.

The month of August brings to the poet sad thoughts of the approaching end of summer beauty. To the gourmet, on the other hand, it brings delightful anticipations of the best filled tables of the year, and the ordinary mortal is not a poet. At no time during the twelve months have we so great a variety of good things to eat as just now, and now, too, everything is at its best, for fruit and vegetables come in on the farmers' wagons instead of the special train. New-Yorkers who spend the whole summer out of the city miss one of the sights of a great metropolis in not being able to see the markets and the wharves at this season. So many piled up crates of goodly cabbages, of regal egg-plants, of homely carrots and the thousand and one other vegetables which fill the wharves to overflowing and block the traffic on the street, form a cheery vision of plenty. One finds it easy to imagine that nobody goes hungry in the midst of such an abundance, and, as such a state of mind tends to satisfaction with one's self and with one's neighbors, it follows that a visit to the wharves has a moral value.

There is undoubtedly quantity in the vegetable supply of New-York, but that alone does not satisfy the inquiring palate. What about the quality of all this mass of eatables? Does New-York really get the best of everything? And, if not, why not? Of course, New-York gets the best of most things, so far as possible, under existing conditions. If everybody had his little back yard in which to grow fresh peas and sweet corn, gastronomic pleasures would be greatly increased. It is also true that if the American people were less fatally good natured they would not permit such imposture as goes on in the vegetable trade. For it is a fact that dealers take advantage of the good humor or the ignorance of their patrons, and that occasionally food that was meant to cheer the existence of some amiable cow appears on the board of self-respecting New-Yorkers.

## CORN, SWEET AND NOT SWEET.

A case in point is that of the sweet corn. This delicious vegetable is rightly the pride and glory of the United States. No other people has evolved the sweet corn as it is known here. The only trouble is that, unfortunately, all do not know it. There is a large amount of field corn passed off on the innocent public as the sweet corn which has been asked for. One dealer estimated the proportion of field corn sent to New-York as 50 per cent of the whole quantity. It gives the growers a better return an acre, and as long as city dwellers confine themselves to saying that the corn served them does not taste like the corn "on the farm" and do not inform themselves of the different varieties and demand them, so long will the corn "on the farm" rank with the mythical pies and cakes of infancy. The best variety of corn is the Country Gentleman. This is a late species, and is small, but deliciously sweet. There is no dissenting voice to the chorus of praise of this variety of corn, and it is about the only one which is recognized by the marketmen as being superior to the ordinary kinds. Because of its small size there is not so large a call for it as there would be if people in general understood its good qualities. It is not likely that an ordinary dealer in vegetables if asked for Country Gentleman corn could furnish it, but in the large markets it is, as a rule, procurable. The Hackensack is also a good variety and sells well. The Mammoth's size is the best part of that variety, for it has lost in delicacy what it has gained in length. The Metropolitan Sugar Corn is an early variety, and is not well known in the markets.

The difference between good corn and the coarse varieties is no greater than that between good potatoes and bad ones. The fact that most cooks consider the boiling of a potato as the A B C of the culinary art, and so give little attention to it, is doubtless responsible for many of the soggy potatoes which are so often put on the table, but there is also a great difference in the varieties. The Bermuda potato is just a Bermuda, without grades of excellence. It is always good, and is especially so because it comes at a season when the soul of man is sick of the winter "good keepers." But new potatoes are not sold exclusively until the middle of June or thereabout, for there is always an oversupply of the old stock that has to be "worked off" on the unsuspecting. After Bermuda potatoes comes the Virginian. This is a good variety. It comes from the peninsula formed by the Chesapeake, and the output is in part controlled by a large company. But if the Virginian is good, do not be led into buying Kentucky potatoes, for you will be likely to repent of your bargain. The soil of that State does not produce good potatoes, and they are not used to any extent in other markets except when the Virginian crop is a failure, as it was last year. The Long Island potatoes are as good as the Virginian, however, and of course form a large part of the supply of New-York City. Of the different varieties may be mentioned first of all the Early Rose potato, which is mealy and about the best. The Chili is also a good variety, but the Hebron is poor. It is useful for seed, and is sent to the market in greater quantities than it should be because of the fact that it is a "good keeper," and

will last the winter through and even linger on through the spring, if buyers are not careful.

## THE BEST TOMATOES.

To secure the best tomatoes one should have the Acme. This variety is brought into the city in large quantities and is a general favorite. The Freedom is the earliest kind of tomato, and the Ponderosa is the largest. Tomatoes come first from Florida, then from Georgia, then up to New-Jersey and Long Island. It is noted that many excellent tomatoes are beginning to come from Texas, a State which is becoming more and more given to the raising of fruit and vegetables for the market.

The onion is a homely enough vegetable, but it has an interesting history. The ordinary sellers of vegetables do not recognize the different varieties beyond the white, yellow and red kinds, but there are many different kinds shipped to New-York from distant parts of this and other countries. The first onions come, as everybody knows, from Bermuda. Next come those grown in the neighborhood of the pyramids and called the Egyptian onions. These are a good variety. New-Orleans contributes to the supply early in the year. Then Spain sends her share, and Havana also, around which city excellent onions grow. Finally Kentucky, Orange County, New-Jersey and Long Island send theirs to the market. No other common article of food is so freely imported from so many different countries. It is vegetable tragedy, too, that the onion, which of all its tribe is most anxious to serve man, should have so unfortunate a habit of making itself disagreeable. None of the many varieties of the onion offer a less unpleasant odor, and until one does man (at least man "who loves his fellow-man") will forego the many benefits which the onion confers on almost every part of the body. But of the onion as it is, well meaning and aggressive, the highest possible development exists. The Southport White Globe is about as good as any, and is also perhaps the most expensive. The Southport Red and Yellow also rank high. The White Portugal and the Silverskin are favorably known to growers.

The difference between fresh peas and stale is as that between the poles. Otherwise there is little to choose among the different kinds. The best four are probably the Dwarf, the Excelsior, the Juno and McLean's Advancer, but these are names for the grower, and not for the market men. There is little if any difference in taste. The same is the case with beans. The Earliest Red Valentine is the best early green spring bean and the Golden Wax is the best wax bean.

## GOOD KINDS OF CELERY.

The White Plume celery is the best early celery, and may be recognized by its long stalk, feathery head and white skin. The Yellow Plume is also a good long stalk variety of another color. There is an attempt to introduce the Pink Plume, the name of which justly describes the color.

A cabbage would not seem to the outside world an inspiring subject for horticultural experiment, yet there are many varieties of this handsome if plebeian vegetable. The Savoy, the Jersey Wakefield, the Autumn King, and the Succession (a new and particularly fine variety) are all names familiar to the best growers and even to the market men.

Lettuce is now grown outdoors all the year round, except for two months. This is the triumph of the grower's art, but, although so much pains has been taken to produce varieties which will stand different kinds of climate, few have been named. The only kinds of lettuce recognized are the straight and the curled and Romaine. The first two are, of course, promptly recognized, and the Romaine is usually sold under its own name.

These are the most highly cultivated varieties of the best known vegetables. It is a pity that the buyer and the retail dealer could not be made familiar with the names of the different kinds of potatoes and sweet corn, for instance, and with those of other vegetables when there is a distinct difference in the quality. But the city dweller cannot hope for vegetables like those of the "farm" of childhood. The glory departs from sweet corn, even the real sweet corn, in one night, and as for green peas, on the day they are picked they are a different vegetable from what is served on city tables. The only real solution of the vegetable question is for everybody to have a back yard and to stay at home from business at least two days a week to care for it.

## SHE ATTRACTED ATTENTION.

From The St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

A Government Department official who recently returned from London brings this story with him: A married couple were walking down one of the main thoroughfares of a North Country town, and the husband, noting the attention other women obtained from passers-by, remarked to his better half: "Folks never look at thee. I wish I'd married some one better looking."  
The woman tartly replied: "Thee thy fault. Dusta think a man'll stare at me when you're walking w' me? Thee step behind, and thah'll see whether folk don't look at me."  
He hung back about a dozen yards, and for the length of the street was surprised to see every man his wife passed stare hard at her, and turn round and look after her when she had passed.  
"Sal, lass!" he exclaimed, "I was wrang, an' tak' it back. I'll never say owt about thy face again."  
His wily spouse had accomplished the trick by putting out her tongue at every man she met.

## UNSEASONABLE.

From The Atlanta Constitution.

"I wouldn't min' goin' ter heaven in a cherry-poot er fire in de winter time," says Brother Dickey, "but I draws de line on dat style of travellin' en-durin' er de summer!"

## SOME RUSSIAN TRAITS.

GENTLENESS, UPRIGHTNESS AND PATIENT STOLIDITY CHARACTERIZE THE PEASANT CLASS.

Arthur Symons, in The Saturday Review.

To me, when I was in Russia, in the summer of 1897, Russia seemed the country of freedom. I was a foreigner. I did not concern myself in questions either of politics or religion. I went at the time of the Medical Congress, and with a friend who was a member of that congress; so that I had certain advantages in my favor. After the stories I had heard of the Russian Custom House I was in some anxiety for the safety of my manuscripts. My bags were not even opened at the frontier. My friend was carrying a book by Edward Carpenter for Count Tolstoi, a book forbidden by the Russian censor, and the book reached Tolstoi in safety. I have never seen anything so orderly or discreet as the collection, examination and return of passports at the railway station on the Russian frontier. Wherever I went, in Moscow and in St. Petersburg, I found, so far as I was concerned, a delightful absence of officialism. I could go where I liked, do as I pleased, was not expected at every moment to conform to some unknown regulation, as one is expected in Germany, for instance. The same freedom seemed to exist even among the natives. Peasants would clamber up against the windows of a royal palace, the coachman would turn to the Prince whom he was driving, and light his cigarette from the cigarette of his master.

And I think I never saw people so friendly with one another, except perhaps in Spain. And this friendliness in Russia goes somewhat further, becomes a more definitely helpful thing; than it does in Spain. No doubt it is partly due to the influence of the climate, to the necessary dependence of people upon each other in their struggle against cold in winter and heat in summer. But it has become an earnest helpfulness which has stamped itself upon the very faces of the people. And after all one has heard of Russian brutality it is interesting to note for one's self the signs of gentleness which are to be found not only in these grave, bearded, patient faces, but in many little, unexpected ways. One hardly thinks of Russia without thinking of the knout. Well, the Russian cabmen drive without whips, using only the end of their reins, and the reins finish in a mere bunch of ribbons.

## INDIFFERENT TO PAIN.

When the Russian is cruel he is cruel just as the barbarian always is, because he is indifferent to pain, his own or another's. He does not spare, because he would not complain. And he has the Mahometan's readiness to sacrifice everything for a cause, which to him is that spiritual and temporal power which is his religion, and which has taken far deeper root in him than any mere sentiment, essentially a modern one, of tolerance or of sympathy with suffering. In the Roumiansof Museum at Moscow there is the cage in which Emilian Pougatchef was imprisoned; it is a cage only very slightly higher and wider than the height and size of an average man; it has chains for fastening hand and foot together, so that the man can only stand upright, without even moving. Inside the iron bars of his portable prison. But Pougatchef was a religious revoler, and to spare one who had taken up arms against religion would have been to spare a dangerous enemy of God.

The word which I should use to represent the main impression made on me by the average Russian, the soldier, the railway porter, the laborer, is uprightness; and it seems to me to contrast very favorably with a quality perhaps equally strong which is to be seen in the face and the bearing of the average German. To the German discipline and obedience are painful duties; he appreciates them and he acquires them, but he becomes something of an automaton in the process. To the Russian they are the duty which is its own reward, a sort of religion which it is a delight to fulfill.

The Russian has a genius for self-sacrifice; self-sacrifice has made him a martyr and a conspirator; it has given him strength and weakness. He can resign himself to anything, and resignation can just as easily be heroism or mere apathy. The heroic side of it we all know; the other, at times comic, side may be seen any day in the streets of Moscow by watching a cabman who has been paid too small a fare. He does not explode into anger, like a cabman in any other part of the world; he does not contest the matter, he does not even remonstrate; he looks at the money in his open hand with a woebegone expression, closes his hand upon it in a gesture of weak despair, and seems to say, "Well, it has happened to me again!"

## A RELIGIOUS PILGRIMAGE.

But if we would see what is really at the root of the national character, the actual nature of the peasant, it is not even in Moscow that it must be sought, but in such a place as Sergievo, and on such an occasion as the annual pilgrimage to the Troitsa Monastery, on the day of the Assumption. The monastery, bulbous and angular, with its red walls and gold and green domes and spires, is set on the triangular point of a small hill; all about it are bright colored sheds and shops and booths and little village houses of painted wood; a village fair was going on in honor of the pilgrimage, and a stream of men and women in bright clothes wandered up and down all the roads incessantly and gathered in groups about the teashops and the booths of the fair. Inside the monastery walls, in the churches and along all the paths, this immense, quiet, ugly crowd wandered on or waited patiently at gateways. It was made up for the most part of women, and these women were all old, or looked old, and they were all ugly and all shapeless, dressed in a patchwork of bright colors, their skirts looped up about their red and wrinkled legs bare to the knee, or above their osier shoes bound about with cords. They were shapeless and uncouth, with bodies that seemed as if they had never known even the animal joys of life; but there was none of the dirt, disease and violence of a French or Italian pilgrimage, of Lourdes or Casabondino. They were clean and sturdy, and they passed slowly, leaning on their staves, or waiting two and two in long lines, to enter the church and kiss the relics, with a dogged patience, without noise or talking or laughter; with a fixed sense of the duty to be done, then of the need of rest, and then of the long journey home. They went in order into the large room by the refectory, took their bread and salt, which they ate in the refectory, and then sat down, like great grown up school children, at long wooden tables in the open air, where the monks served them with bread and soup. Then they flung themselves down on the ground, wherever they happened to find a little free space, and slept heavily. They lay there with their heads on their bundles, themselves like big bundles of rags. Some of them lay in

the graveyard, upon the graves and the turf, like a dead army waiting to be buried.

And in all this there was no fervor, no excitement, a perfectly contained emotion, a dogged doing of something which they had set out to do. They had come from all parts of Russia, walking all the way, and they had come simply to kiss the relics and then to go home again, because it was their duty. They were all good humored, cheerful, contented. They accepted discomfort as they accepted poverty, labor, their bodies, which had never known happiness or beauty. Contentment in them was strength, but it had in it also something lamentable. Here, in this placid and vigorous herd of animals, were women who had never discovered that women could be beautiful, human beings who had never discovered that life could be a desirable thing in itself.

## A UNIQUE ELECTRIC ROAD.

AN INNOVATION IN TROLLEY PRACTICE ATTEMPTED IN SWITZERLAND.

All of the electric motors on trolley cars in America are of the direct current type. In a few shops, however, alternating current motors have recently been employed to drive machinery, and this innovation has led to a good deal of talk about applying the same system to traction work. If alternating current motors would show themselves suited to the operation of trolley cars it would be felt that an important gain had been effected. Where the power for a road is generated at a considerable distance from the line, as is the case in Buffalo, whose supply is drawn from Niagara, it is customary to employ an alternating current for transmission purposes, and then at the scene of action convert the current into a direct one. That conversion, however, involves a slight loss of energy, and calls for the use of an additional appliance. There would be a double economy therefore if the alternating current could be led right into the car motor.

Without going into the technicalities of the matter, it may be remarked that until Tesla invented what is known as the "polyphase" motor it was hard to utilize an alternating current for power purposes, however satisfactory it might be for illumination. But ever since the polyphase motor showed that it would work well in shops, electricians have waited impatiently to see it tried on railway cars. Such a venture has just been made in Switzerland, and if it is not the very first one of the kind, it is certainly a pioneer enterprise. A description of the new line is furnished by "Engineering."

From Berne there radiate railways in all directions. The new line runs north and south, to the east of the city, and intersects three of the older roads. It begins at Burgdorf on the north, and terminates at Thun on the south. It is nine miles long. The track is of the standard gauge. Part of the cars are equipped with motors and the others are trailers. The motor cars weigh thirty-two tons and the trailers twelve tons. There are four sixty-four horse-power motors on each motor car, one motor to each axle.

Professor C. A. Carus-Wilson, an English electrical engineer of high repute, who describes the road and its working for "Engineering," remarks that if a direct current motor is used the speed falls off perceptibly when the load is increased or an un grade is encountered. But he declares that the alternating current motors on the Burgdorf-Thun line behave better under similar circumstances. However, he admits that the grades there were a little too heavy to show the best results. And he also points out that the operation of getting up speed at the start, known as "acceleration," is not as rapid with the alternating current as with the direct. In some classes of service, especially in rural regions, this would not be a serious drawback. But where, as is the case on elevated roads in cities, the traffic is heavy and the trains make frequent stops, this delay in getting up speed would be an objection of no little consequence.

## THE DARKY'S AWE OF GENERAL LEE.

HE FEARED THE EFFECT OF THE COMMANDER'S IDEAS ON AN ORDINARY HEAD.

From The Louisville Courier-Journal.

In a group of old Confederates gathered around the campfire at the headquarters, at No. 43 West Jefferson-st., the other evening, was an ex-captain of Stonewall Jackson's foot cavalry. The talk had drifted to the love that the men of the Southern Army bore for their leader, and a dozen or more stories were told of some little incident in which that love had manifested itself. Then the captain spoke:

"Your stories prove the love that the men of the South had for General Lee, but I remember a conversation with an old negro, who, I believe, had a truer appreciation of his worth than any of you. "After the war closed General Lee assumed the presidency of Washington College, now known as Washington and Lee University. "Ten years ago I visited Lexington, Va., to see the grave of Lee, who lies buried in the family vault of the university chapel. The head janitor was then a white-haired old negro, whose greatest delight in life was to usher a party of visitors into the office that had been General Lee's. His accent in speaking of 'Mars Robert' was one of awed reverence. I asked him a number of questions, and found that his master had been a colonel on Lee's staff, and that he had been employed as a cook at headquarters. In a spirit of banter I asked him if he had ever heard any one say anything disrespectful about General Lee. He scratched his head reflectively, and then said: " 'Yas, sir; jes' one time.' " 'How was it?' I asked. " 'Well, sir, 'twus dis er way. One night erbout de middle ob de war I seed a cur'us man go inter de Gin'l's tent. He cum out, en when he got upfer whar I wuz he wuz er-rippin' en er-roarin' and er-smartin'." " 'What's de trouble?' I sez ter 'im. " ' 'Trouble,' sez he, 'I jes got orders ter ride forty miles ter-night wid er messidge, en here 'tis er-snowin' en er-blown' en er-sleetin' lak all hell perssed. I'm darned if I know whar Gin'l Lee's er-thinkin' erbout.' " 'What did you say to him, Uncle Tom?' I asked of the old blinter. " 'I say ter 'im?' he replied. 'Well, sir, I jes' looked at 'im fer a minnit en then sez ter 'im: 'Fo Gawd, I don't reckon yer does know whar Gin'l Lee's er-thinkin' erbout. Man, sir, ef one er Gin'l Lee's thots wuz ter get inter yer haid 'twould bus' it open.' "