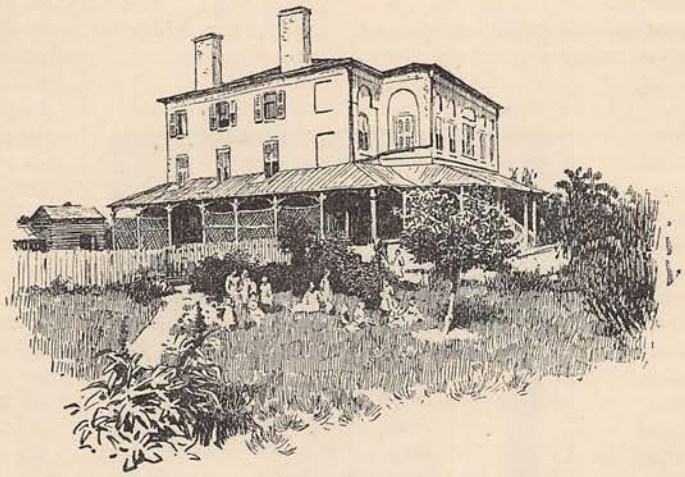
thirty and forty voyages across the Atlantic, to and from the beautiful "Home" at Niagara, with its eight acres of garden and orchard, in a lovely situation within sound of the Falls. A few days after I had this conversation with her, she again undertook the long journey which is now so familiar; and in a few months' time she will probably be again installed at Peckham, preparing a new detachment of girls—she usually takes out about a hundred at a time—for the life in which happiness and prosperity will take the place of the unspeakable weariness and misery in which their first years were passed.



MISS RYE'S HOME AT NIAGARA.

THE PRESERVING OF WHOLE FRUITS.

BY P. HOWARD DAVIS.

DOUBTLESS there are many housewives in the kingdom who during the fruit season have a plethora of fruit, and are at a loss to preserve it in any other way than converting it into jam.

Now, jam tarts are very nice things in their way, but one can soon get tired of them. But a cherry pie at Christmas!—what a mouth-watering thought! I dare say it would sound very odd at some New Year's festivity to hear the hostess ask, "May I offer you some cherry pie? It is made from fresh fruit of our own growing." This, however, is quite a possibility, "provided always" (as the lawyers say) that the directions given herein are implicitly followed.

I regret to inform those who would preserve fruits whole that half-measures will not do; the directions must be carried out in their entirety, or the preserving had better not be commenced.

First for the arbitrary rules, and the hints to guide all operations. The fruit must not be too ripe. It must be sound, and if morning-gathered it will be most likely to produce successful results. The bottles must be rather wide-mouthed, dry, clean, of equal sizes, and of equal substance all over: *i.e.*, the glass must have no thin places in it; a flaw or a crack is also very undesirable. The corks must be sound, and cut to fit the bottles very tightly—so tightly as to demand to be soaked in sugary water before they can be squeezed into the bottle-necks. A number of bottle-bags will be useful: they save hay, straw, and breakages; old canvas sacking does excellently well, and these bottle-bags can be used again and again to envelop the bottles while boiling.

We now proceed with the hints. Make your own bottle-wax; buy *red* bottle-wax from the oilman (the green wax is poisonous), and to every pound of it add one ounce of beeswax. Put both the articles into an earthenware pipkin over the fire to melt, stir well together, and then after the first boiling it is ready to dip the heads of the bottles into. Tie down the corked bottles with strong twine, and in ginger-beer bottle fashion, before dipping them in the wax. The wash-house boiler, the large stock-pot, or the deepest fish-kettle, will answer equally well for the boiling operation so long as a flat grating is put inside, so that the bottles may stand *quite* perpendicularly. Fill the vessel with enough water to come a little more than half as high as the bottles; then cover the latter with a wet cloth, put on the lid of the boiler or pot, and allow all to commence to heat up to boiling point.

So far, I hope, I am understood. All the foregoing

points are absolutely necessary if the best results are to be obtained. There are yet, however, one or two more which deserve to be noticed; for instance: Always boil gently, not hurriedly. A given period of "boiling" mentioned means boiling—actual boiling—and not so many minutes "on the fire." It is best to "double-tie" the corks: *i.e.*, after tying down one way, to repeat the operation again, but across the former one. Hay or fine straw may be placed between the bottles (while in the boiler) as a substitute for the bottle-bags, but it is wasteful and untidy, and the bubbling of the boiling water has a tendency to misplace the hay, &c., and allow the bottles to fall over. Be sure that the empty bottles are perfectly clean and thoroughly dry inside. In waxing over the corks, look carefully to see that no part has been left uncovered. Never, on any account, remove the hot bottles of fruit from the vessel in which they have been boiled until the water it contains has cooled considerably; the sudden change from heat to cold will crack the glass. For the same reason, do not stand the bottles while warm on a damp table or cloth, or in a draught of cold air. Inattention to this rule will cause many a regret.

A moot point now arises in my mind as to whether we shall preserve our fruit with or without sugar; we can adopt either plan, and bring about equally satisfactory results by whichever system we prefer to adopt. Suppose we discuss both?

To successfully accomplish preservation *without* sugar, we must follow a course quite different from the one which uses sugar; but as a recompense, we shall have only *one* lesson to learn for *all* stoneless fruits, and likewise shall have cheaper preserves—though we grant that the sugar will have to be added afterwards, and that the fruit loses some of its colour, and runs the risk of being "overdone" by the re-heating we are obliged to give it when we put it to use. Still, as we all have our fancies, we will, for the moment, talk of the unsweetened article. The procedure is this:—

Fill the clean, dry, wide-mouthed bottles with fresh, sound fruit of any kind. Add nothing—not even some water (which many people foolishly do), because it spoils the flavour of the fruit, makes it "pappy," and in no way adds to its preservation. Be sure that the fruit is well and closely packed in, and then ram the corks (best quality, not bungs—the latter are cut *with* the grain of the cork instead of *across* it) tightly down into the necks of the bottles till they are level with the glass. Now secure the corks perfectly with stout twine, and after putting the bottles into the bags, stand them in the pan or boiler of cold water. Let the water nearly, but not quite, reach the shoulders of the bottles, and stand the pan, &c., on a moderate fire, and allow the water to come up to the boiling point. Next boil gently for just ten minutes; remove from the fire, and allow all to get cold. Now remove the bottles, wipe them dry, and then dip the corks into either melted rosin or melted bottle-wax—taking care to cover every part of the cork—and the fruit will keep for years, if required. Supposing, however, we have to deal with stone fruit—such as damsons, plums, &c.—we must pursue slightly different tactics. To do these nicely, we must take the fruit before it is quite ripe, and it must be dry and sound. Pack the bottles rather closely, but not tightly, with fruit, and cork them a little looser than previously directed; bag them; put them in the pan of cold water only little more than *half-way* up the outside of the bottles. Now let the water heat gently—very gently—up to boiling point, and then keep it so for exactly three minutes, when remove the pan from the fire, and allow its contents to become quite cold. Then cork the bottles down tightly; tie them, dip into rosin or wax, and stand in a cool, dry place. They will then keep for ages.

The preservation of sweetened fruits may be simply performed. First make such a quantity of syrup with loaf sugar and water as may be required, to any strength of sweetness you may fancy (twenty-two degrees by the syrup gauge is the best), and allow it to get cold. Of course you will skim it while boiling. Now fill the bottles closely with fruit—taking care not to bruise any—then *nearly* fill up with the cold syrup, and now cork down tightly, tie, and put on the fire in the pan, &c. (The "time table" for boiling is given below.) After the boiling, allow all to get cold in the pan, &c.; take out the bottles, wipe them dry, dip the corks in melted wax or rosin, and then they are ready to be stored in a cool place, with the corks downwards.

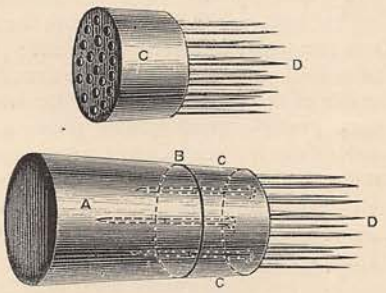
"TIME TABLE."

Fruit.	*Time of actual boiling.*
Green Gooseberries ("Warrenders" are best)	10 minutes
Ripe do. (Red or Yellow)	8 ,,
Green Currants	10 ,,
Red do.	8 ,,
White do.	10 ,,
Black do.	15 ,,
Strawberries ("Seedlings" are best)	8 ,,
Raspberries	8 ,,
Cranberries (English-grown)	8 ,,
Do. (Imported)	10 ,,
Apricots (whole, Green)*	12 ,,
Do. (halves)	10 ,,
Peaches (halves)	20 ,,
Pine-apples (cut into fingers)	25 ,,
Apples (peeled and quartered)	25 ,,
Pears (do.) *White*	15 ,,
Do. (do.) *Pink*	15 ,,
Do. (whole, *small*)	18 ,,
Plums*	15 ,,
Damsons*	15 ,,
Greengages*	15 ,,
Barberries	15 ,,
Cherries ("Kentish Reds" are best)	10 ,,
Do. (Black)	10 ,,
Do. ("Bigaroons")	15 ,,

All fruits marked (*) should be slightly "docked" or pricked with a "docker" before being put into the bottles. A simple "docker" can be made in the following way:—

Take a good sound bottle-cork, and cut off a slice of its end about half an inch thick. Force through the flat side of the slice about twenty strong pins till their heads are level with the cork. Now fasten this piece of pin-studded cork upon the larger piece from which it was cut (by driving in two or three *brass* tacks), and in such a way as to hold the pin-heads tight and allow the points to protrude.

A piece of circular cardboard may be cut to cover the heads of the pins, and will improve the "docker."



In the above figure, A is the large piece of cork; B shows the junction with the smaller piece, C. It is by this joint the pin-heads are held fast. D shows the pin-points.

Do not "dock" the fruit too much, but be sure to touch the stone each time.

NOTES ON THE FRUITS.

Green Apricots.—These must be used before the stone has formed, and while a needle could be pushed easily through them. This fruit is extremely troublesome to preserve nicely, and requires great dexterity of manipulation. Vine-leaves, salt water, and numerous other accessories are required, and I would, therefore, advise that the bottling of green apricots should not be attempted at home.

Currants (of all kinds).—With the scissors nip the fruit off close to the stalks, and then shake them down close in the bottles.

Raspberries and Strawberries.—These must be picked clean, and the berries arranged in the bottles with a long knitting-needle. Be sure the fruit is neither crushed nor jammed in the bottles, and remember that these berries require the syrup to be a little stronger (sweeter) than usual.

Cranberries.—Be sure to distinguish between the English and the imported varieties; each requires a different boiling period.

Apricots (in halves).—These must not be over-ripe. Split the fruit and remove the stones. Crack these, remove and blanch the kernels, and soak them for an hour in cold water before adding to the fruit.

The latter should be peeled very thinly before being bottled.

Peaches (in halves).—Proceed as for apricots in halves, but parboil the halves of fruit for just *three* minutes in syrup first, *i.e.*, before bottling. This will allow the skins to be pulled off in whole pieces. When the fruit is cold, follow previous directions.

Pine-apples must be pared, the eyes removed, the central core cut out, and the fruit cut into fingers the right way of (not across) the grain.

Apples.—These may or may not be peeled, but the cores should be removed in every case. Drop each piece of fruit, as soon as cut, into cold water, in which a very small quantity each of alum and citric acid has been dissolved. This improves the flavour, and keeps the cut edges of the fruit quite white.

Pears (White).—These require greater care than apples. They must always be peeled, dropped in the acidulated water like apples, and then parboiled in it, without allowing the water to actually boil. The fruit is now to be strained through a colander, re-parboiled in cold, fresh, plain water, strained and re-parboiled in cold, fresh, plain water again; then strained, and finished off as usual.

Pears (Pink).—Proceed as above, but put a little liquid cochineal in the water of the second parboiling, and also in the syrup in the bottles.

Plums (Large).—These must be "docked," and each one dropped at once into the pan of hot syrup just as it comes from the fire. The syrup should then be standing on a trivet near the fire. Let the plums remain in the hot syrup for an hour; then remove pan and fruit, and allow all to stand under cover till next day. Now remove the plums with a spoon, and fill the bottles with them carefully. Finish as usual.

Damsons.—As plums.

Greengages.—Ditto.

Cherries (Red and Black) require no additional treatment beyond the careful removal of stalks.

Cherries (White).—These are preserved with half an inch of stalk left on. The syrup should be stronger than usual, and into it should be put, and well stirred, some finely-powdered alum, in the proportion of a quarter of an ounce for every quart bottle of fruit. The alum keeps the cherries a good colour, and as the syrup is sweeter than usual, its presence can scarcely be detected by the taste.