

Topics of the Day.

By Our London Correspondent.

THE HORRORS OF THE FRUIT STALL.

It would surely conduce to happiness in this life if certain scientists were seriously attacked by some of the microbes with which they are for ever threatening the human race. Two of the latest scaremongers are Messrs. Fillassier and Sartory, French gentlemen who are exceedingly busy just at present in presenting to the public the dangers of eating unwashed fruit.

According to these worthies, the man, woman or child who ventures to buy oranges, grapes, gooseberries, strawberries, etc., exposed for sale in shops or on street barrows is inviting disaster.

The barrow fruit, of course, is the most dangerous to tackle; it simply swarms with maleficent creatures. But there is no safety even in buying the finest fruit from the best class of shops. These "experts" bought strawberries from a barrow in Paris at 4 p.m. in a mean street. They washed them in water, and by some means not clearly specified discovered in .06 of a cubic inch of the washing liquid no less than 1,850,000 microbes, chiefly bad ones. Then they washed the fruit again, this time in sterilised water, and discovered 74,000 microbes per .06 of a cubic inch of water; whilst a third bath produced a further 18,000 per .06 cubic inch. Almost as bad were the results obtained from gooseberries bought from itinerant vendors, no less than 900,000 microbes being detached from them in the course of a triple wash.

Better results were obtained from gooseberries bought in a high-class shop, where two washings only produced a total of 92,000 microbes per .06 cubic inch of water, but some grapes bought at a shop in a street much patronised by motor traffic produced most horrible results in the wash.

The first water contained no less than 3,850,000 microbes to the .06 of a cubic inch, the second 120,000, and the third 27,000—practically 80 million microbes in each cubic inch of water if they had been all washed off at the first time of asking!

And then, after telling us these fearful things, Messrs. Fillassier and Sartory calmly tell us that they believe that in the majority of cases a piece of muslin thrown over fruit or vegetables exposed for sale would be enough to prevent the greater part of the microbes contaminating the fruit. The muslin that would prove an efficient barrier to bacteria of which 60 millions can squeeze themselves into a cubic inch of water, and yet conceal their presence from the naked eye, is something the housewife may only dream about.

There is a good deal more to be said for the second suggestion—namely, that fruit should be washed before it is eaten—though it is to be feared that 99 people out of 100 will take their fruit "neat," so to speak, and chance the danger of swallowing a few thousand microbes with each mouthful.

DEARER BEEF.

Meat is to be dearer all round, and there is no indication that prices will fall again for some time. This is no doubt good news to New Zealand exporters of frozen meat, but it is a serious matter for English housewives. The shortage of supplies of live cattle has reached such a stage that the National Federation of Meat Traders has issued this week an official notice warning the public that an all-round rise in retail prices has become absolutely inevitable. The probable increase will average at least 2½d a pound, according to a leading London butcher.

The principal shortage is in the shipment of meat from Canada and the Argentine, the falling off being due, it is said, to the stringent embargo that has been placed on the importation of live cattle in the interests of the public health.

English supplies, too, taken all round, have been very short for some considerable time past; had it not been for more extensive shipments from the States, and more particularly from Aus-

tralia, prices would have risen some weeks ago.

An analysis of the prices obtaining exactly a year ago and today shows some startling differences. The price quoted is per butchers' stone of eight pounds.

	1909	1910
	s. d.	s. d.
Beef—		
River Plate frozen hind-qs	2 4	3 10
" " fore-qs	1 6	2 10
Australian frozen hind-qs	2 4	3 8
" " fore-qs	1 6	2 10
New Zealand frozen hind-qs	2 4	3 10
" " fore-qs	1 6	2 10
Lamb—		
New Zealand	3 4	5 8
Australian	2 8	3 8
Argentine	2 8	5 4

Whilst English meat is not likely to rise considerably, there is every indication of an increase in prices. Frozen mutton is plentiful, and no advance in price in this direction has yet been made, but with the increased demand for frozen meat, consequent on the rise of beef, a stiffening of prices may be expected.

The effect upon the consumer of the rise in wholesale prices varies according to the locality. Thus in the West End

mediate effect on the departure of Americans for this country. The great industrial prosperity which prevails throughout America is resulting in a phenomenal rush to Europe. Many Americans have arrived in London. The Mauretania brought more than a thousand passengers. "At no time since the Coronation have the prospects for the American season been more encouraging," said M. Gustave, the manager of the Savoy Hotel, to an "Express" representative. "In my opinion the death of King Edward will not affect the American season, thanks to the kindly action of the King. Thus far our American business has been remarkable. Although the season has only recently opened, we have been full up, and are turning away scores of persons daily. Moreover, we are booking rooms for prospective visitors right up to the end of July." Other West End hotels told similar stories of not a room to spare and bookings many weeks in advance.

MILLIONAIRE VISITORS.

The presence of Mr. Roosevelt in England has served to add a final lure to the long list of attractions for American visitors.

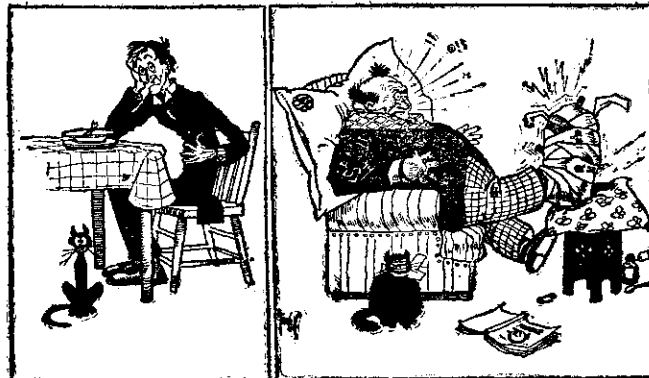
Among the American millionaires or multi-millionaires who are either here or on their way to visit what they describe as "London, the finest summer resort in Europe," are—Mr. J. P. Morgan, financier and art connoisseur (now in Paris); Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt, railway magnate; Mr. Harry Payne Whitney, banker and financier; Judge Moor, prin-

weeks' holiday quite as readily as the average Englishman affords a five days' trip to Boulogne. It is one of the most popular English misconceptions of the day that these people are millionaires. With the majority a sum of not more than £40 covers the cost of their entire trip. This £40 is divided much as follows:—

Second-cabin return ticket	£17
Three weeks' hotel in London (with full board and lodging)	10
Incidentals, including purchase of clothing and souvenirs	5
Trips to country and provinces	5
Total	£40

Their itinerary is far from expensive. It is also quite untrue that American visitors spend their money recklessly while in England. The majority about quite as keen business acumen in obtaining the most value from their pleasure as any other foreign visitors, and, indeed, make a shilling go quite as far as the average Londoner. Another misconception is that Americans in England demand American food at their hotels. They do not. While away from home they ask for a complete change of food and cooking. The only two exceptions are a heavy meat breakfast and iced water at all meals.

He took hot whisky, gin and rum,
To cure a nasty cold;
His home was Pandemonium
For weeks and weeks I'm told;
He made a fearsome bulabuloo,
And smashed the furniture!
But now— he's well (and sober, too)
Through Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.



WHICH IS WORSE?

High cost of living

or the cost of high living?

the increase at Smithfields has caused no fluctuation in retail prices, as butchers in the best-class districts rarely vary their prices, whatever the state of the market. In the poor quarters of London, on the other hand, it is the butchers who suffer most severely. They have not been able to increase their prices, because people would not lay them. Butchers in poor neighbourhoods have been trading of late at a heavy loss, and some have had to close their shops altogether.

The people of the middle-class have so far been the most seriously affected. They have had to pay as much as 2d a pound more for their meat within the last two months, and are now faced with a probable further advance of 2d or 3d. For a man with a family to provide for on a small income this is a very serious problem.

One effect of the rise in beef has been to compel more people to buy frozen mutton, so that the New Zealand industry stands to benefit by the situation.

LONDON INVADED.

PROSPEROUS AMERICA SENDS CROWDS OF VISITORS.

NOT ALL MILLIONAIRES HOWEVER

The American invasion of London has begun in earnest, and there is every prospect of a record-breaking summer. The King's forethought in expressing the wish that the amusements of the public should not suffer because of the death of King Edward, and the equally thoughtful order shortening the period of general mourning, have had an im-

perial American exhibitor at the International Horse Show, Mr. Theodore N. Vail, capitalist, president of the American Telegraph and Telephone Company and of the New York Telephone Company. The effect of the great industrial prosperity which prevails in a country that enjoys the full benefits of a protective tariff is not confined, however, to millionaires. Thanks to the high wages which obtain under protection, thousands of business men and women are able to afford a holiday in England.

OTHERS.

"Fully 60 per cent of the American visitors in London at the present time are not multi-millionaires, millionaires, or even millionaires in the making," the manager of one of the largest American residential hotels in London stated. "They are merely ordinary hard-working professional or business men and women who earn so much money in America that they can afford the expense of a 3000-mile journey to London and a five

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

Of what use is WEALTH without HEALTH to enjoy it?

There are many well-known men to-day with

UNTOLD GOLD

whose health will not permit them to enjoy a good dinner, and why? Only because in their early career they neglected to keep their blood free from impurities.

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