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PLATE XIII.

WOMAN CHURNING BUTTER.

THE method of making butter was known at a very early period in the eastern part of the world, as appears by the sacred writings; for among the similies used by Solomon in his book of Proverbs, we find, "surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter;" and again in Isaiah it is said, in allusion to the promised Messiah, "butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." It is even supposed to have been in use as early as the time of Abraham.

It is remarked that the Romans did not use butter, except in medicine; we may infer from hence, that these enlightened people were unacquainted with the true method of making it; or during the period when they devoted their minds to the study of multiplying luxuries for the table, this delicious substance, had it been known, would have found its way into their confectionary and pastry. Butter was made about the same time by people of certain countries as a substitute for oil, and burnt in their lamps; particularly by the Christians of Egypt, who used it at their altars: indeed the same custom of burning it in places of worship is said to exist even now in some parts of the East.

The process for converting cream into butter, varies greatly in different parts of the globe. In Barbary, the milk or cream is put into a goat's skin, suspended from one side of the tent to the other, and pressed to and fro in one uniform direction; this quickly occasions the necessary separation of the unctuous and wheyey parts. There are various modes of producing this valuable substance in our own country. In some parts of Devonshire and Somersetshire, butter is made without a churn, the flavour of which is much esteemed; the cream is put into a large metal pan, and stirred with the hand until it becomes butter, which is effected in a short time; this is made of scalded cream. They have also a method of producing clouted or clotted cream; the milk is poured into brass pans, and left to stand for eight hours; it is then put upon a gentle fire, and remains till the cream begins to shrivel; when it is skimmed; having acquired a consistence nearly equal to butter, and is of a cool and delicious flavour.

Butter is generally made in England with the churn; for many ages the pump or upright form was used; but of late years the barrel

churn has been adopted, which answers best for large dairies; this machine has recently experienced great improvement. And in some places, where there are very extensive dairies, it is constructed so as to be worked by a horse.

Our trade in butter is very considerable: some compute that 50,000 tons are annually consumed in London, which is chiefly made within fifty miles round the city; 210,000 firkins are said to be sent yearly from Yorkshire, Cambridge, and Suffolk, each firkin containing 56lbs. Utoxeter in Staffordshire is a market famous for good butter; but none is esteemed equal to that which is made in Essex, well known by the name of "Epping butter."

Many excellent laws exist for the regulation of this trade; and to prevent fraud; in the first instance, the coopers are obliged to make the tubs or vessels for packing butter of a specific weight, regulated by the quantity which they are designed to contain. And every maker, before such vessel is offered for sale, shall on the outside of the bottom brand his name and place of residence with a hot iron, together with the weight thereof. And the dairy-man, farmer, or seller of butter packed in these vessels, is obliged also to brand his name and place of abode, upon the outside of the top, and on the bouge or body across two different staves at least, to prevent the butter being taken out and changed, under a penalty for neglect of £5. for each offence. And any person convicted of forging or counterfeiting the name or marks upon a vessel, is subject to a penalty of £40. The city of York, and town of Malton, have special directions it the Act of Parliament for the sale of butter.

THE

COSTUME

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

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