

TOPICS FOR FARMERS

A DEPARTMENT PREPARED FOR OUR RURAL FRIENDS.

Clover Hay, Pea and Cornmeal, and Bran Produce the Best Flavored Butter - Transplanting Weeds - About Soap-Making.

The Flavor of Butter.

The flavor and aroma of butter are caused partly by the direct influence of the feed and partly by ripening of the cream. To some extent, says Hoard's Dairyman, flavor may be secured by the feed. It would be difficult to produce fine-flavored butter from the cream of cows fed on straw alone. For the flavor in butter, clover hay (properly cured), pea meal and cornmeal, with bran and a few mangels, would, in my judgment, be best. Feed and proper ripening of the cream, together with the exclusion of all bad flavors, and careful handling of cream and butter, are needed to secure the proper flavor. The "sweet cream" flavors and the turpentine flavor, etc., are mainly produced by the feed. Butter fat from fresh cream has a flavor of the ripened cream butter. Proper ripening of cream will overcome the flavor produced by indigestion. My opinion is that the milk becomes tainted with the odor of the foods more by the inhalation than by direct absorption from the food. "Starters" are quite valuable in fine butter making, and especially so where poor or bad flavors exist in the cream, as they overcome these to a greater or less extent, and assist in improving the flavor of the butter, though they may not remedy it altogether.

Transplanted Weeds.

Weeds should not be hoed during wet weather. The moisture on their leaves will prevent them from drying up, while the roots against the moist and loosened earth will get a hold and send out new fibers. A weed once or twice transplanted is almost as difficult to kill as a perennial. The only way to kill such a weed is to cover it while wet with moist soil. Then the sap in the weed will cause it to rot, and this will effectively check new growth of the root.

Leaching Ashes for Soap.

There are still many country places where the housewife annually sets her leach tub to make the yearly quota of soap for household use. Generally it will pay better to use the unleached ashes as a fertilizer on the land and buy for soap making the concentrated potash that is now sold in every country store. There is a great variation in wood ashes, and the boughten potash is much more certain to make good soap than is the supply of potash in the ashes from the winter fires. The old-time soap grease was also a very ill-smelling and unsatisfactory product to handle. It was refuse scraps of fat and lard from all sources, kept with no regard for cleanliness, it being supposed that the lye would correct the smells and make into soap maggots with which the rotten mess usually abounded. All kinds of fats are now so much cheaper than they used to be that even those kept scrupulously clean are not very costly. With boughten potash and clean fats for it to work up the much-dreaded and disagreeable business of soap making will be so changed that those who remember the old times will be surprised at the difference. The gain to fruit crops from using the unleached ashes in the orchard will many times repay the cost of the boughten materials for soap, or, better still, will enable the farmer to buy his soap by the box already made, as many farmers now do.

Small Cucumbers.

Small cucumbers, or "tiny Tims," are worth six times more per pound than are large ones, and the more you pick the more there will come. Many growers are only just now putting in the seeds, says the Philadelphia Ledger, and expect a larger and more profitable crop than is sown earlier. The worst of the bug pests, they say, are out of the way for the time being, and before a new lot comes the plants started now will be far advanced as to withstand their attacks. Pickles should be cut daily and at once be cared for. The smaller they are the better. If cucumber plants are to be reset, do it before the runners start, and in this way: Set a piece of stovepipe over the plant and press it into the soil to the depth of three or four inches. Run the spade under and remove all the new bed. When set withdraw the stovepipe.

Digestibility Measures Nutrition.

We can make no advice in scientific cattle feeding until we start on the basis of the equivalence of like food elements from whatever source obtained. As the Maine station puts it in one of their reports: "Science has given practice no safer or more useful conclusion than this: Cattle foods have nutritive value in proportion to the digestible dry matter they contain." In other words, a pound of digestible fat from one food is of just as much value as a pound of digestible fat from each and every other food, and the same of the digestible starch, cellulose and albuminoids. Moreover, the rule can be made wider, and include digestible dry matter as a whole, without reference to the proportion of its parts. I. e., the digestible dry matter of timothy hay, for instance, is just as valuable, pound for pound, as the digestible dry matter of cornmeal, roots or any other food material.

Spraying Vegetables.

That Paris grows and becomes entomological is the leading insecticide, and that the Bordeaux mixture is the best remedy for plant diseases, is the conclusion of the New York station at Cornell. The Bordeaux mixture is a

erally useful, though extensive growers need a machine of greater capacity. The suction-pipe should always enter the tank at the top, and the pump should be of brass or steel lined. Hand pumps should allow the weight of the body to be used on the handle while at work. Vermorel nozzles give a better spray than the disk machines. For spraying potatoes and tomatoes a nozzle is needed which can be lowered between the rows and directed so as to force the spray up through the vines. The agitator is needed to keep the poison in solution. The best forms work up and down in an upright tank, like the dash in an old churn. Where the pump piston has a packing, this should be often renewed. For killing cabbage worms and insects, no liquid has been found equal to dry paris green applied with a hand-sifter. Powder greens are useful for applying dry powdered poisons, pyrethrum, tobacco dust and sulphur. Bamboo extensions should be used in spraying large trees.

Preserving the Stones of Fruits.

During the season for peaches, plums and apricots, those who wish to can increase and improve their orchards by a careful selection of the best stones of these fruits. These stones may be sown immediately in 12-inch rows in good garden soil, or they may be preserved until fall or next spring by placing them in moist sand or earth in some shed or cellar. The best way is to mix stones and sand together and then place in low flat boxes, and put these boxes in the cellar in earth up to a level with the top of the box. They will keep excellently and without loss. The usual plan of wrapping the stones up in paper and keeping them dry until fall is a bad one, as the fruit kernel dries out and few will sprout when planted. — Baltimore American

Cutworms.

While tobacco farmers are greatly annoyed by the cutworm, there are many other field and garden crops that are liable to be destroyed by the pest. A small number of plants in a garden may easily be protected by a simple device that could not be applied on a large scale without involving a good deal of labor. Take bands of any kind of tough paper, and place them around the plants when transplanting, so that the lower part of the band will be an inch or two below the surface soil, and the upper part an inch or so above. This will keep the worms away and never interfere with the plant.

Mixed Crops for Fodder.

Dr. Goessman, of the Massachusetts station, advises growing mixed crops, say summer vetch and oats, as they produce larger yields than when grown singly. Sow together forty to forty-five pounds summer vetch to four bushels of oats, and seed early in June. The fodder is highly nutritious, and may be cut green and fed for two or three weeks, or cured for hay. Sow at various times; it will grow through the season.

Notes.

Those who ridicule the "razor-back" hog of the South are guilty of keeping cows that compare as unfavorably with the pure breeds as the razor-back hog does with the Berkshire or Chester White.

The striped cucumber beetle attacks cucumbers, melons, squashes and pumpkins, and is not easily destroyed. Spray the vines with a solution made by dissolving a gill or salt-peter in a gallon of water, and then apply fine tobacco dust around the base of the vines. It is said that charcoal will absorb 90 per cent. of its bulk in ammoniacal gas, hence if used freely over compost heaps it not only prevents unpleasant odors, but renders the compost more valuable by retaining the ammonia which would otherwise pass off.

The quantity of corn fodder is almost unlimited, but it is criminal to waste any of it, as has been the woeful fashion. Cut up, shredded and baled, it keeps green and sweet, and is a rich, nutritious food; it, in this shape, promises to be an important item of food in the future. Whole oil soap is something that should be kept in a convenient place for use on house plants. The well-known mealy bug is destroyed by a solution of whale oil soap, if it is sprinkled on the plants, and it is also an excellent preventive of lice on animals. Being cheap as well as harmless to plants and animals, it should be used as often as desirable.

It looks as though the future offered excellent inducements for meat products, not only in the form of beef, but also as pork, mutton and poultry. It is an excellent opening for profit; and, as stock-raising provides a home market for much that is grown on the farm, there is something gained in that respect, while some manure and increased fertility of the soil will result from the keeping of stock.

The poorest farm can be made fertile without manure or fertilizer, if time is no objection, for nature slowly restores all soils, as has been demonstrated by the fallow system of resting the land. This can be done more speedily, however, by growing something to turn under. Of course, the true remedy is manure and fertilizers, but if they are insufficient, keep the land covered with something, if only of scant herbage.

Nearly all of the most successful farmers are those who make a specialty of milk production, and they are the only ones who get rid of mortgages and finally bring their farms up to the highest condition of fertility. The best dairymen are those who discard the scrub and use cows of the highest producing capacity. When the herds are improved so as to increase the milk supply, the cost is reduced, because fewer cows, less labor and smaller expense for shelter will increase the profits.



Better Road Laws Needed.

The road-tax system of personal service or commutation is unsound as a principle, unjust in its operations, wasteful in its practices, and unsatisfactory in its results. Some system should be devised, based upon property, and property-owners should not exempt on account of age. As the case now stands, some families escape any road tax year after year, all of the members being either too young or too old, but they are abundantly able to do their share, and use the roads quite as much or more than any one. In the meantime their poorer neighbors, tenants it may be, or young men without land, must leave the crops in a critical condition, at the whim and convenience of the roadmaster. Often the worst piece of road is untouched and a bit sultry the roadmaster or his friends is worked after a fashion.—M. S. S., Cherokee county, Georgia.

Motor Movements.

Doctor Chancellor, United States Vice Consul at Hayre, looked at the motor experiments in France and reports that petroleum, in one form or another, promises to quickly solve the problem of motors for small vehicles.

His report indicates that he no longer doubts. The gasoline motors, as he saw them, have reached the practicable degree of compactness, economy and simplicity. Wagons, carriages and even bicycles are propelled with ease and cheapness.

What is all this to Americans? Our town pavements are bad and our country roads in most sections little more than rut-paths made by travel in the virgin clay or sand.

Maybe the motor will do what the horse and mule never did do. It may compel the construction of smooth pavements and hard roads.

As motors are introduced on a commercial scale, we shall quickly see whether the saving is so great that all who do not use them will be at a conspicuous disadvantage. If that is the case, American shrewdness may assert itself and begin to have a level, firm surface and proper grad-s wherever men travel.

Convicts for Road Building.

The United States Department of Agriculture has issued a bulletin on the subject of using convicts for road-building. In North Carolina, the bulletin says, the employment of convicts for this purpose has proved exceedingly satisfactory. The State of New York has tried it, and so far as it has gone, is pleased with the experiment. We have been urging for years the employment of convicts on the roads; and if the proposition had not everything to recommend it, and if it were not plainly practical, it is probable that the legislatures of different States would have acted favorably upon it long ago. But the average legislature appears to hate to do anything that is recommended by common sense. In every State there is an army of convicts, and their employment is usually a bone of contention. But every State has thousands of miles of road that need improving. The labor agitators will not do it; and even the common laborers of our towns and cities will not do it without bankrupting themselves. Here is a class of work that nobody wants to touch. Why not turn the convicts on it? Why not furnish the stone and machinery and permit the criminals to do something and yet not come into competition with the outside world?—Farmers' Voice.

USE FOR OUR OLD MONITORS.

Historic Boats May Yet Prove of Benefit to the Country.

Those relics of the civil war, the single turret monitors that have been rusting to pieces in the James River near Richmond, are to be brought to the League Island navy yard early in July, and an attempt will be made to restore them to something like their original condition, says the Philadelphia Record. Every one of them has seen active service, and their sides are full of the dents made by rebel shot and shell. Time and environment have been even harder on them than the Confederate guns, for the salt water has corroded their bottoms and the rust has eaten into their plates. Several attempts to have the old fighting ships removed to fresh water have been frustrated by the influence of Virginia politicians, who saw in their removal a loss of power, as they furnish employment for many laborers and watchmen.

In their present condition the monitors would take months to fit up for action, and they have cost the government large sums of money to keep them even in their present condition of disability. Protests have recently been made against their removal from Richmond, but Secretary of the Navy Herbert, after fully considering the matter, has announced that they must be brought to League Island, where they can be economically kept in repair, and held in readiness for an emergency instead of being maintained uselessly where they are.

There are six monitors in the James River, all of them of the low freeboard, single turret type, and the building of all was authorized by the act of April

17, 1862, the keels being laid the same year. The Ajax, built by Snowden & Mason of Pittsburgh, is 225 feet in length, 43.8 feet broad, and has a displacement of 2,150 tons. She cost \$629,582 to build.

The Canonicus, a sloop ship, having the same measurements, was built by Harrison Loring in Boston, at a cost of \$622,963. The Catskill and Lehigh were built by John Erleson himself, the former in Brooklyn, N. Y., the latter in Chester, Pa. They have a length of 200 feet, a breadth of 46 feet, cost respectively \$427,760, and \$422,760, and have a displacement of 1,875 tons each.

The Mahopac was built by Z. & F. Secor in Jersey City, and is 225 feet long and 43.8 broad. She has a displacement of 2,100 tons, and cost \$635,374. The Manhattan, having the same measurements, was also built in Jersey City, but by Perine, Secor & Co., at a cost of \$628,879. Each of these monitors is armed with two 15-inch guns, and has a speed of between five and six knots.

It is proposed to bring all six of them to Philadelphia, but an examination will be necessary before they can be sent to sea, and if any prove too far gone for repairs they will be sold for old iron. These that are brought to this city will be towed here by some of the big government tugs. Once at League Island they will be anchored in the back channel, and will probably be utilized for training purposes, both for the regular service and for the naval reserves.

Commander James M. Forsythe has been assigned to the charge of the League Island navy yard, and assumed his duties there on July 1. To him will fall the task of superintending the proposed removal. There are already four monitors at League Island, the Nahant, the Montauk, the Jason and the Manhattan. The latter has two compound armor turrets, and has just gone out of commission, having been recently on the north Atlantic station. She is 250 feet long and 55 feet broad, and was built by John Roach at Chester, Pa. in 1874.

The three others date from the same time as those now in the James River. They have the same measurements as the Catskill and the Lehigh. The Montauk was built by James Erleson at Brooklyn, the Nahant by Harrison Loring in Boston, and the Jason by John Erleson at Chester. The first mentioned cost \$423,927, and the two others \$413,515 and \$422,766 respectively. The Montauk has just been fitted up for the use of the New Jersey naval reserves.

Not Unwholesome.

Many people believe that it is an injurious practice to drink with meals. A prominent sporting man is of an opposite opinion. He says that drinking nothing during or for an hour and a half after meals is the best of ways to train down weight, but he cannot do it because it always brings on rheumatism—probably from the solid food producing over-concentrated salts in the circulation, and consequent deposits in the muscular fibre. The same writer says that the notion about animals being injured by giving them a drink when heated is a stupid and cruel piece of barbarism; that it only does them harm when the drink is very cold, by producing nervous shock as it would to a man; while if the chill is taken off at first, it refreshes a heated horse to take a good drink just as it does a heated human being.

Graceful.

Scotch ministers must be adepts at paying compliments, if the following instance, quoted by Denn Ramsay, is a fair sample of their skill:

In some Scotch parishes it was customary for the minister to bow to the laird's pew before beginning his discourse. On one occasion such a pew contained a bevy of ladies, and the minister, feeling a delicacy in the circumstances, omitted the usual salaam. When the laird's daughter—a Miss Miller, widely famed for her beauty, and afterward Countess of Mar—next met the minister, she rallied him, for not bowing to her from the pulpit. "Your ladyship forgets," replied the minister, "that the worship of angels is not allowed by the Scotch Church."

He Kept in the Middle.

In a day when sham misogynists are as plentiful as blackberries in summer, it is refreshing to read of a man whose misogyny was real and consistent. He was a rich old bachelor of Vienna, and his dislike of women was so strong that he always purchased three seats at a theater and sat in the middle one to avoid the possibility of sitting next to a woman. When he died it was found that he had continued his prejudice to the grave and had ordered the purchase of three graves, in the middle one of which he desired to be buried.

Their Signatures.

In one of the fashionable "Kurorte" on the Rhine, reports a writer in the Realm, he came across some queer entries in the visitors' book of the principal hotel.

One of the Paris members of the Rothschild family had signed "R. de Paris." So happened that Baron Oppenheim, the well-known Cologne banker, was the next arrival, and he immediately copied the above signature by signing "O. de Cologne."

Valuable Tortoises.

The villa of a French nobleman who lives in the vicinity of Paris is chiefly remarkable for its magnificent conservatory, which is used as a banquet hall. Creeping among the plants in this winter garden are to be seen a number of little tortoises, which their eccentric owner has had enamelled and studded with precious stones.

PRESERVING THE EYESIGHT.

Rules That May Be Useful to Those Threatened with Blindness.

A few simple rules carefully obeyed will do much to preserve the eyes in health. Light and color in rooms are important. The walls are best finished in a single tint. Windows should open directly upon the outer air, and light is better when they are close together, not separated by much wall space, not distributed. Light should be abundant, but not dazzling. It should never come from in front nor should sunlight fall upon work or on the printed page. Never read or sew in the twilight after an exhausting fever nor before breakfast. Look up frequently when at work and fix the eyes upon some distant object. Break up the stretch of wall by pictures that have a good perspective. These rest the eye, as does looking out of the window. When at work on minute objects rise occasionally, take deep inspirations with the mouth closed, stretch the body erect, throw the arms backward and forward, and step to an open window or out into the open air for a moment. Two desks of different height are valuable for a student or writer, one to stand by and the other to sit by. Plenty of open air exercise is essential to good eyesight.

The general tone of the nervous system has much to do with the eyesight. Prolonged or excessive study frequently has pain or poor vision as symptom. The use of tobacco may bring about defective vision and alcohol sometimes destroys it utterly, owing to nerve inflammation that it sets up. City life, with shut-in streets and narrow outlook, favors the production of errors in vision. When looking at distant objects the normal eye is at rest. To see near by, muscular effort is required. This effort, when constant, changes the shape of the eyeball. After the eighteenth or twentieth year parts of the eye that earlier showed signs of bulging or becoming near-sighted may acquire new strength, and those who escape myopia up to this time are usually free from it after that. The children of near-sighted parents are in special danger. They require constant care. It is best to have all children's eyes examined for defects when they are 10 years old.

Near-sight and color-blindness are barriers to the army and navy, to certain fine and mechanic arts and to many industrial pursuits. Their early recognition saves time and money and often prevents the discouragement of defeat. Ounces of prevention are better than tons of cure. There are but few forms of partial or total blindness that were not at one time the reverse of hopeless. In view of this fact the duty of parents and guardians is clearly manifest. Ignorance must be replaced by knowledge, carelessness by enlightened forethought. Precaution in the way of type, light, color and rest and exercise, together with occasional calls upon the oculist, will probably secure fair eyesight for life.—Outlook.

Adopted by a Newspaper.

Willie and Oscar Mannerstrom are the legal wards of the Grand Rapids Evening Press.

The paper is a great friend of the poor boys of Grand Rapids, and has done a great deal to help them in different ways, but it has eclipsed even itself by the adoption of these boys, who last winter were homeless and friendless in Chicago. And what a success the venture has been!

The first thing to do was to find some way for the boys to earn a livelihood. Such little fellows they were, only 12 and 10 years old, that it was impracticable to think of their doing anything very hard. Some one suggested establishing a messenger service in connection with the Press, to be run by the boys. Neat uniforms were bought for them, they were furnished with bicycles, given the use of the office telephone and lots of advertising in the paper, and the thing was done.

The kind-hearted people of Grand Rapids patronized them at first because they felt sorry for them, but now they do so because they know them, like them, and trust them. Before long Willie, the oldest, found he could make enough money by himself to support both, so Oscar began going to school, and his teacher says he is a remarkably bright boy.

Both boys are brim full of energy and ambition, and will, no doubt, when grown be successful men of whom the Press need never be ashamed.

America's Frostless Belt.

What is supposed to be the only frostless belt in the United States lies between the city of Los Angeles and the Pacific Ocean. It traverses the foothills of the Calahuenga range, and has an elevation of between 200 and 400 feet. Its breadth is perhaps three miles. The waters of the Pacific are visible from it, and the proximity of the ocean has of course something to do with banishing frosts. During the winter season this tract produces tomatoes, peas, beans, and other tender vegetables, and here the lemon flourish, a tree that is peculiarly susceptible to cold. Tropical trees may be cultivated with success, and in connection with this fact it is interesting to know that a part of the favorite territory has been acquired by Los Angeles for park purposes and it only a question of time when the city will have the distinction of possessing the only tropical park in the United States. Strange to say, only the midway region of the Calahuenga range is free from frost, the lower part of the valley being occasionally visited.

Rivers of Buttermilk.

There is more than one way of turning the tables on a person who indulges in the practice of "drawing a long bow." One of the most effectual meth-

ods was recently employed by a slow-spoken Vermonter on an "accommodation" train.

Several persons were listening in open-mouthed, wide-eyed astonishment to the talk of a loquacious young man, whose stories increased in size and general incredibility as time went on. He was a resident of a town adjoining that in which the elderly Vermonter had spent all his days; but the old man watched the narrator in silence, though with none of the interest displayed by the other listeners.

At last the young man mentioned one of the citizens of his native town, and remarked incidentally that the man had an immense dairy, from which he sent out over a million pounds of butter, and an equal quantity of cheese, every year.

At this, several of his hearers looked decidedly incredulous, and one of them, turning to the elderly man, said:

"You come from round his way, I believe; did you ever hear tell of that dairy?"

"Wal, no," drawled the person addressed, with a perfectly grave face; "I don't recall havin' heard of it till now, but I have heard that there's a man over in that town that has ten sawmills, that are worked an' kep' a-goin' by buttermilk, an' I presume to say it's the same man, an' if one story's true, like as not the other may be."

The Indian Swell.

A long-skirted tunic or frock of white muslin, close-fitting white trousers, and a rose-colored turban with a broad band of gold lace and tall, flashing plume of dark feathers and gold filigree, were the salient points. Other accessories were the sword belt, crossing his breast and encircling his waist, of dark green velvet, richly worked with unalloyed gold, and thickly studded with emeralds, rubies and brilliants; a transparent yellow shield of rhinoceros hide, with knobs of black and gold enamel; a sash of stiff, gold lace, with a crimson thread running through the gold; bracelets of the dainty workmanship known as Jeyjore enamel thickly jeweled, which he wore on his wrists and arms; and there were strings of dull, uncut stones about his neck.

The skirts of his tunic were platted with many folds and stood stiffly out, like the skirts of a "premiere danseuse" in ballet, and when he mounted his horse a servant on either side held them so that they might not be crushed.

Four valets had charge of this costume, and it took them some time to array their master. The trappings of the horse were scarcely less elaborate; his neck was covered on one side with silver plates, and his mane, which hung on the other side, was braided and lengthened by black fringes relieved by silver ornaments.

White yaks' tail hung from beneath the embroidered saddle cover on both sides, and his head, incased in a head-stall of white enameled leather and silver, topped with tall aigrettes, was tied down by an embroidered scarf in order to give his neck the requisite curve.

Sounds Like a Scotch Story.

A case of unusual strictness in Sabbath observance is reported from West Auburn, Me. A farmer was waited on by one of his neighbors who asked for the loan of his team the following Sunday to take his wife and children to the cemetery. At first he flatly refused to let the team, arguing that it would be a sin to receive money for such a thing on the Sabbath day, but he finally said to the neighbor that he would think it over and let him know Saturday, remarking that he would pray over it in the meantime. Saturday the neighbor called and the farmer said that he pondered and prayed over the matter, and come to the conclusion that it would be no harm to let the team, but that the neighbor must not pay for it until some week day following. So the neighbor held the team to go to the cemetery on Sunday, paying for it on Monday, and everything was satisfactory.

Do You Know.

That many a poor typewriter could make a good servant girl.
That it takes a long time to decide whether "Trilby" is or is not immoral.
That geese are intelligent compared with women who try to cheat nature.
That golf offers better facilities for flirtations than any outdoor recreation.
That it is a splendid law of etiquette in Japan that ladies cannot talk of their servants.
That families not going to Europe this season are almost mortified.
That the vacation days spent in "riotous living" are never beneficial.
That the caprices of some society women are insane enough to suggest an asylum.
That those draw social lines closest who ought not to be within them themselves.

Profitable Rivalry.

Topsham, Maine, has a very satisfactory way of settling a town quarrel. Owing to the appointment of a chief engineer of the fire department who was not acceptable to some of the firemen the latter formed an independent company and bought a new hand tub. The town now has two companies, and there will be a hustle to see which can get to a fire first and do the most effective work.

Consistency.

"Now, you must not repeat this," said Jones to Smith, after retelling a choice bit of scandal. "Oh, certainly not," said Smith. "How did you happen to hear it?" "My wife told me. She is just like any woman—cannot keep a secret of course."

You can select a man from any sect to be a guide and philosopher, but it takes a Quaker to be a guide, philosopher and friend.