

FOR AND ABOUT FARMING.

INSTRUCTIVE MATTERS FOR INDUSTRIOUS FARMERS.

Beginning With Bees--Scab of Potatoes and Roots--Hens or Pullets for Laying--To Tell Good Seeds from Bad.

Beginning With Bees.

There is wonderful difference between the honey yields of different localities; one man may report: "I never had a greater crop," while another will say: "My bees have done scarcely anything." There are localities where combined honey cannot be profitably produced, and others where it will not pay to run for extracted honey; in most cases a judicious combination gives best result.

The debated question, "Which bees to start with," is of little moment to a beginner. After you find out your location, then try the different races until you find one that suits you. Some races of bees do well in one location some in another. After getting your bees home and on their permanent stands, read some good book on beekeeping and subscribe for one or more good papers. I think a bee journal of more importance than a bee book because the journal is constantly presenting the new and valuable discoveries made by the most progressive apiarists of the day.

Scab of Potatoes and Roots.

Extended experience with the scab leads the North Dakota Experiment Station to the following interesting conclusions: Scabby "seed" tubers under ordinary circumstances produce a decreased crop. 2. Seed potatoes free from scab upon soil free from the disease will produce healthy potatoes. 3. The disease germs can remain in the ground from one crop to another. But not the least interesting is the demonstrated fact that by soaking the seed in certain chemicals before planting an uninfected crop can be grown from the scabbiest potatoes, provided the soil be free from the scab germs.

For the treatment obtain a barrel and place in it 15 gallons of water. Dissolve 2 oz. of the sublimate in 2 gals. of warm water, add this to the barrel and stir for a time. Into this solution place the washed potatoes for an hour and a half. The liquid can be used for further potatoes. After the treatment the tubers can be cut and planted in the usual manner. The substance employed is a strong poison and great care needs to be taken in its use. A similar scab is found on beets of various sorts and as it is probably the same, it is unwise to raise potatoes on the same land successively if they are scabby and it follows that beets should not follow scabby potatoes. It is probable that other root crops are infested with the fungous disease, and likewise it is to be expected that other preventatives will be found effective.—Dr. Byron D. Halsted.

Contrast of Cellars.

A cellar built with too little expense is generally a costly adjunct as long as it lasts. The walls are often not thick enough or properly mortared to make them durable and frost-proof. A mere breaking of joints without using mortar in the middle of the wall will not hold it firmly together. A poorly built cellar, while it lasts, incurs a necessity for banking every autumn, when a quantity of manure or straw is placed between the house and an unsightly fence surrounding it. The following spring this must be drawn away and a general scraping given to the ground it occupied. Providing a harbor for rats and mice and the killing of all the grass near the house are among the exterior effects. The contents of the cellar are liable to freeze in very cold weather unless a fire is kept burning, which incurs expense, bother and danger.

The modern cellar wall is built about 2 ft. thick and mortared throughout above a line 4 ft. from the bottom. The top is extended to the floor above, against which it is snugly pointed. No banking outside and no stove or frost inside. Windows double-pane, well putted and fitted remove the necessity of a candle on entering. It is important to give the ground surrounding the house a good grade and provide ever rough for the

house, also the earth in contact with the wall may become saturated with water, admitting frost more readily than a merely moist soil and increasing the liability to leave the wall inward. A cement floor that may be readily cleaned with mop or broom and that excludes vermin is a welcome improvement. The destruction in a single year of fruits, potatoes and vegetables by rats and meadow-moles would go far toward meeting the expense of a floor to exclude them.—Clark M. Drake.

To Tell Good Seeds From Bad.

The Germantown Telegraph gives a test for the vitality of seeds which we do not remember having seen in print before. Corn is taken as the sample, but the facts are true of all grains. All seeds may be divided into three parts, the germ, the body and the skin. The germ is the part which contains the life principle—the part which sprouts, and is therefore the life of the seed and of the future plant. On the vigor and perfection of the germ or chit depends the value of the seed. The body is the reserve fund of the germ, which supports the embryo sprouts, both top and bottom, or stem and root, until the root is advanced enough to feed upon the soil. During this process the body is generally absorbed entirely to support the plant. The skin of a seed is merely for protection; it protects the interior from undue moisture and minor enemies. The germ is of amber color, and cuts under a knife exactly like cheese. The body is harder, of various colors, and much less susceptible to attacks of water or insects. These are the characteristics of well-ripened seed, and are invariably. If the seed is caught by frost before becoming ripe, the chit crumbles to a fine powder and becomes dead. So the test of good seed, sure to grow, is the cheesy character of the germ; a very simple thing, easily tested with a sharp knife, and infallible.

Hens or Pullets for Laying?

Whether to retain the old hens or to hatch early pullets is one of the unsettled questions in keeping poultry, says Poultry Yard. The fact is both the old hens and pullets may be preferred, according to circumstances. That the pullets seem to excel the hens at times is true, but the matured hen is better for breeding purposes than the pullet. The hen, after she begins to lay, will often grow fat and remain so on a very small quantity of food. It is difficult to reduce a fat hen except by actual starvation, especially with some breeds, and this is the difficulty, though unknown to some, that induces them to discard her for the pullet, as the pullet from doing double duty of laying and growing, does not fatten so readily. The chicks from eggs produced by hens are nearly always stronger and more vigorous than those produced by pullets, and the hen lays a larger egg than the pullet. The claim that the hen will not lay as many eggs the second and third years as the first is not true. The hen simply fattens more readily as she enters her second year, and becomes aged. If fed judiciously, she should cost less than the pullets and lay more eggs, as well as retain her vigor till she is five or six years old.—Western Rural.

Worms at the Root of a Rose.

The small white worms that infest potted plants and eat the roots are the young of a small black fly that breeds in manure or rich soil. The flies may be seen about the roots on the surface of the soil, and are most easily destroyed by pouring strong tobacco water on the earth. There is no need to repot the plants if this remedy is applied. It may be needed more than once, and any flies seen should be caught and killed. The flies, or rather the grubs, are generally brought in the manure. Another remedy is to dip the pot completely under water at a heat of 100 deg. or as hot as the finger can be kept in it for a second. This will drive out or kill all kinds of worms, and especially earth worms, which are often injurious to plants growing in pots. It is advisable when choosing the soil for such plants to sift it and examine it carefully for these pests, and see that it is free from them. The first indication of the presence of this pest is the yellowness of the leaves and their dropping from the stems.

Short Rows.

It is estimated from very reliable sources that this season Virginia had 100,000 acres of land devoted to tobacco culture.

Eggs from a filthy and vile-smelling hen house can not be really fit to eat. The quality of eggs is affected both by the food and surroundings of the hens. A correspondent says that in saving seed corn there are five points to look at: Length of ear, depth of grain, smallness of cob, well fitted ends, and a good place to keep it.

The Country Gentleman says an Albany county farmer placed on each bale of hay shipped, the information that it was grown on gravelly loam and was free from dust and chaff—with name and address, and for this got \$1.50 above the market price.

There are some ways, at least, in which more protection would help the farmer. If he would protect his cattle from cold, storms and winds, his poultry from vermin and his tools and machines from sun and rain, it would increase his income and reduce his expenses.

When cuttings are being rooted by amateurs in small tin or earthen vessels, placed in sunny windows, the process can be forwarded by painting the receptacle black. The color absorbs the heat and imparts it to the sand or earth, thus facilitating the starting of the roots.

Do not allow the sheep to be out long in rain or snow. When the fleeces get filled with either, it takes a long time to dry out and a great deal of animal heat to dry it out, and this heat requires extra feed to keep up. A heavy fleece thoroughly saturated with water is a heavy load for the animal to carry about.

THE NICARAGUA CANAL.

The President of the California Alliance on the Subject.

To the Farmers' Alliance of the State of California, Greeting:—It seems to me that the time has arrived when I should again speak to the members of this great Brotherhood throughout the Pacific coast, and warn them against the schemes of certain parties to attempt to force congress to guarantee the bonds of the Nicaragua canal scheme. Some time ago there was organized in San Francisco what is known as the "Traffic Association." It purported to have been organized for the purpose of obtaining some relief from the robbery practiced upon the producers of this coast by the grasping railroad monopolies entering this state from the East, and so far as it worked on this line it had our hearty support. But this association had no more than fairly organized, when it was switched off upon the Nicaragua canal scheme and they appointed a committee to inquire into the matter, and said committee reported favorable to the bonds being issued by the government, and their report was adopted by the association, thus changing the object and intent of the association from one to give us relief from the pirate railroad corporations, to an institution to boom the Nicaragua canal, and they now threaten to inflict upon us a petition for that purpose. Don't sign any such petition! We have placed ourselves on high ground upon this question, and we mean to stand there until we get relief. In the letter to the chamber of commerce, I used this language: "About the end of President Arthur's term," he entered into a treaty with Nicaragua to guarantee the protection of the canal, but before the treaty was ratified, Cleveland was inaugurated and he promptly withdrew it. Warner Miller and others came before congress for a charter, pledging themselves that the government would not be asked for any assistance to build it. The charter was granted upon these terms, which I believe they had no more authority to grant without an agreement to defend the territorial integrity of the states where such interests lie, than they had to grant a charter to build a railroad from Paris to Berlin. They are now willing to take the government into partnership upon the same old terms—that it should furnish the means and the corporation should pocket the profits. Congress also chartered a "construction company" to build a canal. This, I suppose, is a kind of a "Credit Mobilier" or "Contract and Finance company," which you have probably heard about before, chartered for the purpose of dividing the profits among three or four of the principal stockholders. But Miller and others say there is no risk to run by the government. If this be so, let them put up their private means, of which they have sufficient to build the canal without any aid from the government. But suppose \$100,000,000 would not complete the work, then they would not doubt ask the government to take a second lien, as in the Pacific railroads, and the money given them by the government would be used to corrupt the members of congress as in the former case, and the courts would step in and declare the corporation did not owe the government anything until the bonds were due, and in the end I fear the United States would have to pay the bonds and interest as in the Pacific railroads. In my message to the state Alliance I used this language: "I placed the Alliance on the highest grounds in the Nicaragua canal letter to the chamber of commerce, viz: That the people of this nation had voted their last subsidy to great corporations for the purpose of controlling commerce or hatching out a new brood of millionaires. That if the government desires to invest \$100,000,000 in the enterprise, it must own the canal and run it in the interests of the people." In my letter to the Bankers' Magazine Sept. 15th, 1891, I used this language: "The people of this great country have voted their last subsidy to build up monopolies who oppress them with the very gifts so generously bestowed. We believe hereafter when the people furnish the means for the construction of these great public highways, they should own and control them, and run them in the interests of the people. We have already built all the great public highways to the Pacific Coast, and paid for them by taxation, and they are now used to oppress the very people who made the donation, and are pressing us to the wall with their thriving rates of fares and freights, and while we subsidize the steamships with thousands of dollars every year, they enter into combinations to rob the producers. The Pacific Mail, after receiving subsidies from the government, receives bribes from Huntington & Co. of \$700,000 a year to keep up freights and fares by sea. This amount in addition to the subsidies we pay every year is the enhanced price of freights. This canal would be a great benefit to the Pacific if two things were done, and only a curse without them. The ownership of the canal by the people and the abolition of the tariff restrictions on the ports of the Pacific states. If these two things are not done it will make Victoria the large seaport of the Pacific coast and enrich the British empire at our expense, and the great merchants and manufacturers of San Francisco can have the privilege of laying back and getting rich off each other by trading jack-knives. Not only may depend upon it, that the Farmer's Alliance will never assist, in building up any more private corporations to oppress them. If it can be built upon the conditions indicated, the Farmer's Alliance will give it their hearty support."

From these quotations from public letters and documents it is plain to be seen where we stand. We don't intend to go into partnership with any more private corporations to build up the great public highways of commerce. Especially when we furnish all the money, and the private corporations get all the turkey.

Now I say to this canal committee, don't make the mistake of ignoring the modest wishes of the people. They do not ask the confiscation of the ill-gotten gains of any corporation, but we do demand a fair deal in the future, and we intend to have it, and we are on the sidewalk line now, and will not permit the enemy to intrench themselves behind additional outworks

in the shape of Nicaragua canal bonds.

MARION CANNON, State President.

Ventura, Cal.

Workmen Must Suffer.

Paris, Feb. 5.—Prices are rising rapidly as a result of the new tariff bill. Pork and mutton have advanced 3 cents per pound. Italian and Dutch cheese have risen 100 per cent and foreign soap 200 per cent. The extra cost to workmen for necessities of life is estimated at 1 franc daily.—Press dispatch.

There, now you have it from the Associated Press itself. That dispatch must have slipped through by accident for the Associated Press carefully suppresses all such items. But the facts are there all the same. Is it possible that there is a working man in Kansas or the United States that is too blind to see that a tariff takes the money out of his own pocket or stomach? The average laboring man in Topeka pays about \$100 a year for tariff, the mechanic twice that and the fellow whose family expenses are \$1,200 a year puts up about \$500. The average amount per family of five in the United States is \$250. During the campaign of 1888, the writer of this asked for a quarter's worth of sugar, in the store of Green & Kaile on the North side by saying: "Please give me 13 cents worth of sugar and 12 cents worth of tariff." The form of the request brought on a discussion. To show the absurdity of our position Mr. Green demanded: "Do you mean to say that but for the tariff I could sell you 20 pounds of sugar for a dollar instead of 12?" We answered: "Yes, sir, that is just what I say." He turned from us in disgust, too full of contempt to utter another word. Last Saturday as Sam Hindman was tying us up a quarter's worth of sugar he remarked: "There is just one pound more of sugar for twenty-five cents than you could have got a year ago for fifty." To which we replied: "Yes, but there are still fools in Topeka who will vote for a tariff." We hustled out lively, for Sam is a good Republican and will shut his eyes and "vote or strait" even if it takes the hair off—the fellow that eats the sugar. The man who advocates a tariff is a knave or a fool. The man who votes a tariff on himself is a fool any way.—Alliance Tribune.

California Farmers Alliance: Many of those who laughed at the Association Press accounts of the convention of the Farmers' Alliance at Indianapolis and were in high glee when they heard that the Alliance had split and that it would last go to pieces after the convention, which they believed was a failure, are now wearing faces as long and as serious looking as an undertaker at a funeral when they learn the truth through the reform press. They begin to realize now that the convention was a grand success instead of a failure, and that the split, which they thought would break up the Alliance, did not amount to anything except in purifying the ranks of the Alliance by weeding out the undesirable material that had found its way into the organization. It worries the enemies of the Alliance considerably to think—now that they are learning the truth—that instead of the Alliance going to pieces it is increasing in membership and gaining a stronger foothold every day. They know that the success of the Alliance means death to monopoly and a speedy ending of the unjust revenue that are now being derived from the honest labor of the farmer, mechanic and laborer. So it is not to be wondered at that those leeches of humanity who are enemies of the Alliance go about wearing a long and serious looking face, for they have a good cause to look worried.

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