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AGRICULTURAL NEWS

THINGS PERTAINING TO THE FARM AND HOME.

It Is Unwise to Incur Much Debt to Stock and Tool the Farm—Amount of Fertilizer to Be Used—Directions for Spraying Trees.

Beginning Farming.

It does not seem wise to incur much debt to stock and tool the farm. A team is a necessity, but a serviceable one may be purchased very cheap. Certain tools are indispensable, but it is better to get only these at first and add to them afterwards, one at a time.

Some cows may be purchased, and others added or raised. It is most profitable sometimes to begin small and increase as experience and results seem to warrant. The same is true of poultry, small fruits, etc. The farm may be gradually improved, buildings repaired, and needed improvements made without being burdensome. Warm, comfortable stables are a necessity to profitable dairying, and a silo is a great help to cheaper feeding. One should be careful about making investments that do not tend, directly or indirectly, to pay for themselves and increase the earning capacity of the farm. Much may be learned by a study of the methods of successful farmers in the neighborhood.

In selling the products, the middleman should be dispensed with so far as possible, and business done with the consumer. If the farmer intends to cater to a summer hotel or similar trade, he must have a variety of products. What these shall be he must judge for himself, and be influenced by the demands. All dairy and poultry products will find a great market. All choice fruits will sell well and be profitable to grow, as well as fresh vegetables. Those maturing during the season when summer boarders abound must be chosen. The claim is sometimes made that the summer hotels and boarding-houses get most of their supplies from the city. This is often true, but it is because they are forced to do so. They must have certain continuous and regular supplies, and in many neighborhoods these cannot be obtained from the farmers. There is good money and genuine satisfaction in furnishing these choice products. Often city people who are well fed direct from the farm during their summer outings, desire a continuance of these same products in their city houses, and thus the market may be extended. The summer boarder is a profitable field for cultivation.—Country Gentleman.

Small Dressings of Fertilizer.

A professor in one of the experiment stations ridicules the farmers who use only 150 to 200 pounds of phosphate per acre, saying that this quantity is not enough to give the manure a fair chance. It all depends upon the crop to which the fertilizer is applied. It is fair to presume that the farmers who use this small quantity per acre know what they are about. One hundred and fifty to 250 pounds of phosphate per acre, drilled in with wheat, barley or oats, produces large increase of the crops of all these grains. These amounts are for such crops all that are needed on good land, and will produce better results than more would do. We have known farmers to apply 400 to 500 pounds of phosphate to grain, causing too rank a growth, giving sometimes a poorer yield of grain than the smaller amount. The phosphate with the seed grain gave it a start, and probably made some of the soil in contact with it give up more of its plant food than it otherwise would. But if phosphate is sown broadcast instead of being drilled with the seed a larger amount is needed to produce any effect. More mineral manures should also be applied to potato and vegetable crops, but the amount that can be used in the hill with potatoes is not more than 150 to 200 pounds per acre. If broadcasted, 600 to 800 pounds per acre can be used with profit. Where these large amounts are used much of the phosphate remains for use the second year. The small dressing of phosphate with grain shows its effects in the clover which follows it.

Tar for Wounds on Trees.

Some kinds of fruit trees have such delicate bark that their trunks and in some cases their branches have their bark sealed and cracked by exposure to the sun. The Twenty-ounce apple is especially liable to this injury. It is a very valuable and productive variety and this is its only fault. Henry Reynolds of North Carolina says that the application of tar to bark that is scalded and cracked enables it to heal perfectly. He finds it very valuable to cure injuries made by the peach tree borer, taking care to first kill the borer. The application of the tar to the trunk of peach trees near the ground he finds to be the cheapest and easiest way to prevent the deposit of the peach borers' eggs.

Spraying.

As to spraying apple trees, all depends on what they are to be sprayed for. If for the scab, which of late has proved so damaging to the apple crop, they should be sprayed twice before the leaf buds open, and with Bordeaux mixture. If they are to be sprayed to destroy the codling moth, this should be done soon after the blossoms fall, and with Bordeaux mixture, adding about two pounds of London purple to 300 gallons of the water; mixing the purple first in a small dish into a thin paste, before putting it into the tank of water. London purple is better than Paris green, for the reason that when mixed into the water it does not settle as Paris green does. Once spraying thoroughly for the codling moth, if well done, will do, except when a rain follows the spraying very soon, in which case it should be repeated. A light spray, just enough to wet every part of the tree, is all sufficient.—Country Gentleman.

Horses in Old Age.
It is a common opinion that a horse of twelve years is too old for service, but I have one at the present time that is thirty years old, and good for a ride of thirty miles a day yet. He is doing his usual work and keeps his level beside a mule only six years old in the plow or the wagon.
I once bought a mule that was said to be forty-five years old, and the evidence was certainly trustworthy that he had been worked in one family thirty-five years, as I bought him from the grandson of the man who had him all that time. I think I am correct in saying that the noted trotting mare Goldsmith Maid went into the breeding stable only when twenty-six years old, and many of the best of the racers have lived over thirty years.

There is a record of a sidle horse in England that reached the age of fifty-nine years, at which his teeth and eyes were still good, and he was then pensioned off by his owner on a farm. My forty-five-year-old mule did good service drawing empty railroad cars into a mine which I was then working, to be loaded with iron ore, and I kept him at it two years, when I gave him to the person who bought out my interest in the property.

He was still at the same work two years after that. My old horse is still able to shell his corn as well as my young mules can, and how much longer he will work I suppose depends on his ability to feed, which just at present seems to be assured for several years, as evidenced by the vigorous neigh when I go into the stable at feeding time. And occasionally he takes a colt-like frolic with his companions in the pasture.

Now, if it is possible for a horse, by means of good feeding and general care, to live and work to such an age as this, how much is the aggregate loss which occurs through neglect and mismanagement on all the farms in the country?—Country Gentleman.

Heavy Seeding on Rich Land.

The question as to whether thin seeding or thick seeding of grain is preferable cannot be determined by any general rule. Sometimes thin seeding produces a full crop, especially if the seed be sown early and the season be such as to induce tillage of the plant. But on very rich land this makes too luxuriant growth of straw, which falls down and makes the grain light and shrunken. If the soil is very rich it is better to sow the grain so thickly that the plants will slightly crowd each other from the first. About the time of heading the plants will draw so heavily on the soil for moisture that each will check the growth of the other, and all will stand up with well-filled heads of grain. But this heavy seeding will be hard on clover or grass seed, though not so much so as will the fallen straw where the seeding has not been so heavy.

Manure for Onions.

The amount of manure necessary to bring a good crop of onions depends on previous treatment of the land; in other words, on its present state of fertility. It is always safe to be liberal and to err on the side of generosity, rather than the opposite. Put on a good coat of manure if you have it. No soil is better adapted for the exclusive use of fertilizers than that which is well provided with organic matter, like muck and peaty lands, etc. Still, we would prefer the application of good, rotted stable manure, at least every second or third year. Nothing in the shape of fertilizers for muck lands would be superior to wood ashes and bone. On a good, rich muck, we think 100 bushels of unleached wood ashes and 100 pounds of fine bone meal an acre would be sufficient to give an extra crop.

Weeds in Clover Seed.

The foulest seed sold is that of red clover. All sorts of weed seeds may be found in it, and much of the seed itself is not sound. It is not inferred that such seed is sold with the object of imposition, but as much of it comes from different sources it is difficult to secure clean seed. The clover seed is a very small bean, and is easily distinguished with a large reading glass of high magnifying powers.

Advantage of Young Feed.

Giving warm feed to young animals not disposed to be thrifty will very often have a happy effect. These animals may suffer from weak digestion, which in turn produces a poor appetite. The animal does not eat heartily, and what it does eat is not well digested. A hot mess some cold morning sharpens the appetite and tones up the digestion.

GOWNS AND GOWNING.

WOMEN GIVE MUCH ATTENTION TO WHAT THEY WEAR.

Brief Glances at Fancies Feminine, Fritious, Mayhap, and Yet Offered in the Hopes that the Reading May Prove Restful to Worn-out Womanhood.

Gossip from Gay Gotham.
New York correspondence:



REALLY stylish skirts depend for their correctness more upon their flare than anything else, but this can be accomplished in various ways and the accompanying pictures show several methods of bringing it about. In all of them it will be noticed that, in spite of the skirt's side flare, it swings toward the back, so that as the wearer stands at ease her toes are close to the hem in front and a long way from back and sides. This is characteristic of all the best skirts, this matter of "hang" being as important as that of "hang" and cut. Oh, the ambitious woman who thinks she can be all right with a hastily selected garment must consider more things than its price and its being lined throughout.

With these points in mind, it will be well to see that, while skirt and bodice do not hatch in an old-fashioned way, they are planned with reference to each other. This, of course, leaves entirely out of the calculations the fancy waist that will go with any old skirt, and applies exclusively to brand new outfits.



COMBINING SOLID AND OPEN-WORK GOODS

First to be considered is the initial pleat's gown, which is especially suited to the combination of solid and all-over-open goods. It is equally well adapted to wash goods, to wool and perforated cloth or to solid and perforated silk. The skirt hangs in a wide front pleat that faces at the foot, three narrower pleats stand out on either side, and at the back three others fall at either side of a top middle pleat that lies flat to correspond with the front. These pleats are all the result of cut and shape and there is not a tape or a "tack" on the under side. A deep band of the open-work material is set along the hem of the skirt and is at its widest at the round of each pleat. It is in the presence of this band and its shaping that the newness and style of the skirt is expressed.

A modification or elaboration of this is a skirt having the front pleat not quite so wide and three pleats on each side that swing a little more fully to the front and round more gently into each other. This model appears in the second picture. At the back are seven pleats of one size, three at either side of a central outstanding one. Like the first example, this employs lace, perforated or open-work goods with plain material. A novel use is made of the latter by slashing the front pleat as



PLEATS THAT CONSTITUTE A COMPROMISE

beauty of the skirts that "go with anything" is by no means lost forever, only in an entirely new gown it is better to let the skirt proclaim that it is really made for just one bodice and not to do back duty for many.

Every skirt sketched here shows in some degree—but the third more clearly, perhaps, than the others—that stiffened linings are a compromise. Not long ago the coming of hoops was heralded, and womanhood gave to the prophecy a reception that made its fulfillment hopeless. But the spread of folds was not to be avoided, even if the hated wire trellis was downed, and it brought with it an item of cost that makes a serious inroad upon light purses. "Haircloth \$5" is the item oft repeated in current dressmaking bills.



A MARVEL AND BRAVE NEW.

that shows how dearly women bought their independence of hoops. This third skirt spreads as widely and almost as stiffly as if hoops filled it out, but judged by present standards it could hardly be improved upon. Of glance silk, its skirt has three pleats on each side of the plain front and four more in back. At the top there are small fitted puffers of gupure. The bodice has an 1830 yoke of gupure with draped fronts that are gathered into points at the collar, and the back is made to match, except that the pleats are undraped. The full sleeve puffs and in long lace cuffs.

But little short of a marvel of construction is the skirt that follows in the artist's depiction. It is made with a boxpleat in front with one at either side, the sides are in three single pleats, and the back is set in boxpleats to correspond with the front. Each boxpleat is gored to shape, all unnecessary material is cut away on the under side and each boxpleat widens towards the foot to suit the flare of the skirt. This means transcendent skill on the part of the cutter, and for the wearer that serenity of mind that only a clear conscience can bring. Such a skirt can never make over into any other style.



AS NOVEL AND LIGHTER.

and that is one thing that lends to the wearer the lasting peace that a very long pocketbook devoted to the demands of dress permits. What if such a skirt is horribly heavy! Will not the thought that each boxpleat appears to be caught under a buckle at the waist band suffice to give the wearer strength to bear the weight? Of course it will! What if yards and yards of material are necessary! Will not the fact that the design necessitates the cutting of priceless lace for a band on the hem counteract that misery by a greater one, and the combination create perfect happiness? To be sure!

Now for the prettiest design in the world for a skirt of soft silk or any delicate fluffly summer material. It is almost wicked to stretch dainty laws, Dresden or Japanese silk over stiff hair cloth and take all the character out of the goods, and it is not always easy to plan loose drapery. This design meets the case exactly. You may use as many yards of material as you like in this skirt. There is not a gore, not a cut anywhere, and when seamed together the skirt is as wide at the waist as it is at the hem, which is saying a good deal these days. Ten yards of lace are set point up about the hips. Copyright, 1895.

The "Tribby" straw hat for women is rather prematurely advertised.

NAVAL WARFARE.

Vastly Different Now from the Time of Decatur.

The usual spring war cloud which hovered over France and England and the little quarrels of the United States with England and Spain served to reawaken interest in naval development and navy tactics. While it is not at all likely that the United States is in danger of immediate war, notwithstanding the blustering and bravado of certain of our public men, it is not an idle thing to consider what such a war would be like. If with any European power but Great Britain it would be wholly a naval war and under conditions entirely new, for since armored vessels came into existence naval warfare has been revolutionized. That brave and interesting little fight in Hampton Roads between the Monitor and the Merrimack thirty-three years ago revolutionized modern war. Since that day there have been such vast improvements in sea fighting machines, for that is what men-of-war are, that no one can foretell what the next experience will be, and it is this uncertainty, perhaps, that keeps nations on their good behavior.

If Nelson or Decatur could revisit this terrestrial globe he would not know his quarter deck, and all his seamanship would be useless. The maneuvering for the weather gauge is a lost art, for steam has conquered the winds and the waves. Nelson used to say, when they talked to him about Napoleon, that all he wanted was "to get Bony on a wind," but that would not suit his purpose now. He must have a vessel that can carry tons and tons of coal, besides its armament, and steam at the rate of twenty or twenty-five miles an hour.

Nelson brought the art of naval war to perfection with the means he had. A battle in his days depended upon the wind, and to obtain the weather gauge was the first maneuver. The vessels were made of heart of oak, with huge masts covered with thousands of yards of canvas, that had to be handled while in action. A ship was manned by hundreds of sailors, and carried sixty, seventy, eighty or a hundred guns. In a battle of fleets the vessels were laid close together, yardarms were locked, boarders dashing from one ship to the other, and hundreds of men were slain. But the ships were not injured greatly, and were often carried off as prizes and refitted for the victor's navy.

No such warfare is possible now, for, though fleets would undoubtedly give battle to each other, there could be no hand-to-hand conflict. The arms they carry would be apt to settle the matter, and the best and most accurate gunnery would win. From the accidents that have occurred, like the sinking of the Victoria, it is known that an armored vessel injured below the water line sinks like an iron pot, with but little chance for the crew.

The changes made under the influence of modern science make naval warfare an unknown field for the sea warrior. Naval strategy, of course, remains unchanged, for that has relation only to the movement of fleets and vessels of war. But naval tactics which have to do with the actual fighting of fleets will have to be greatly changed. All that Nelson asked or ordered was to be laid alongside of one of the enemy's ships. In the war of the future that order will not be made, for it cannot be executed.

Fighting a Gander.

There are few better fighters than a goose, or a gander, more particularly. Those ragged white Russian geese bite like bulldogs. It is no mere peck with them; they bite and hang on. The common old farmyard gander is a capital fighter when he is driven to it. At a certain place in Scotland there used to be a caged golden eagle. He preferred to kill his own dinner, and it used to be a cruel sport to watch him dispose of any unfortunate hen or guinea fowl that was put into his cage. They tried him with every sort of domestic poultry. Ducks, pea-fowl, turkeys—the eagle was master of them all. He had no trouble in finishing them off—no trouble even with the "bubby-jock." At length they tried him with a gander; but he could make nothing of it. The gander crouched into a corner, drew back his head, presenting but a broad, spade-like bill, from whichever quarter the eagle tried to attack him. The eagle fumed and fretted, and grew very angry; he made desperate attempts to take the gander in the flank, but the wise old bird defeated them all. In the end they had to give the gander his liberty as the reward of his courage, and to satisfy the eagle with the much more succulent dainty of a young turkey.

The Electric Crater.

Everybody knows that an arc light is formed by causing an electric current to pass between the points of two carbon rods. One of these is called the positive and the other the negative electrode, and the current passes from the former to the latter. Particles of carbon are carried off from the positive electrode until its end becomes cup-shaped.

To the little cup thus formed the name of crater is applied, and from this crater four-fifths of the light is emitted. The negative electrode does not become as hot as the other.

Between the two a little cloud of vaporized carbon is formed, rising from the crater, and this vapor gives forth a golden yellow light. But it is overpowered by the light of the crater itself, which has a violet tinge due to the incandescence of solid particles of carbon.

The arc of light extending from one electrode to the other also has an axis of a violet color which is its most brilliant part.

The fact that most of the luminosity comes from the crater explains the reason why the light does not appear equal in all directions. It is brightest from that point of view which shows the largest portion of the crater.

A very interesting effect is often noticed when flies, or other insects, flutter about an arc light. Their shadows cast on a neighboring wall appear gigantic. The reason is that the light of the crater is concentrated in a point smaller than the bodies of the insects, and the boundaries of the shadows consequently widen with increase of distance.

Splitting Seconds.

The measurement of minute intervals of time is one of the most difficult subjects met with in the laboratory, and this is more especially the case as the apparatus employed is often little adapted for the use of those who lack experience in the precision gained by years of experimental work in physics. A Frenchman has recently devised a photochronograph which comprises a metallic disk, turning freely on an axis passing through its center. The free end of a spring carries a needle point, which bears against the disk; this spring is timed to give five hundred vibrations per second. This rate is determined by timing the spring so that it vibrates between known vibrations of four hundred and ninety-three and five hundred and twenty-two periods per second.

Any want of extreme accuracy in the determination of the intermediate point is not of great importance, as it can be shown that the difference only affects the fifth place of decimals of a single second. Of course, any variation in speed of the disk does not influence the number of vibrations of the spring. By means of a magnesium light traces of the path of the spring are left upon a sensitive plate mounted upon the disk. The apparatus is certainly not new in principle, but the arrangement is one which has not been described in this particular form.

The End of a Flying Machine.

A sad accident has happened to a flying machine at Sydney, New South Wales. The inventor did not accompany the machine on its trial trip, and as no one volunteered the machine was allowed to go alone. The following account of its performance has been sent over: "Hissing and snorting, it slid along the tram for a distance of 100 feet, when, having reached the end of the rails, instead of lifting its wings and floating gracefully across the harbor, it bumped against the rocks and toppled over onto the beach, part of it becoming submerged by the waves. Some of the hot clinders from the furnace came in contact with the light materials of which it was constructed and set them on fire, and in a few moments a portion of the framework and the machinery were all that remained of this production of inventive genius. The manager explained that the trial was a failure because there was not sufficient wind to fill the sails, and no one had been placed inside to sail it."

A Hard Name.

An unknown term or an unusual word often has great weight with the ignorant. Every one knows the story of the learned professor who silenced the Billingsgate fishwife by calling her a "parallopipedon." Here is a story of similar import. It is of a little colored boy who recently ran home from school to his mother sobbing as though his heart would break.

"What's the matter, boy?" asked the sympathetic mother, clasping the child to her breast. "Has any one hurt you?" "Mike Flynn's been calling me names," cried the boy. "Deary me! What did he call you?" "Lasses stick?" "Wuss 'en that?" "Blackie! Ink bottle?" "No." "Soot bag?" "Oh, no!" "What was it, then?" "He called me—he called me Ethiopean," the boy sobbed.

Announcing the Engagement.

An engagement should be announced first by the family of the bride-elect, writes Mrs. Burton Harrison, in the Ladies' Home Journal. This is done either verbally or informally to friends or done by note to those whom it is desired shall receive early information. The man may at the same time write to those of his friends whom he desires to have a share in his happiness and whom the girl's family could not so well reach. Churlish, indeed, would be the spirit to withhold interest in a new engagement, and the telling of it by the principals almost always inspires a kindly feeling for them in those told. Lovers have, perhaps, the best founded claim to thinking themselves of the first interest to a community of any class of people, and are quite entitled to assume all the honors and privileges of the situation.