



CHAPTER III.—Continued

The next afternoon finds Susie pacing up and down the grass in front of the bishop's house, and peering wistfully through the prison bars for a sight of his little daughter. Some unknown fascination seems to draw her to this child. Susie has been walking up and down for what seems a long time to her, when she is startled by receiving a smart slap on the shoulder, and there stands the weird child outside the gates.

"Hunt her!" she cries, as she seizes Susie's hand, and Susie keeps pace with her new friend, until they have skirted the garden and are well hidden by the high ivy-covered wall at the back.

"Now," says Lena, throwing herself down on the grass to recover her breath, "now I can play with you. Where is the kitten?"

"I left him at home," replied Susie; "you know you said yesterday that you would never play with me again."

"Oh, no, auntie! She was there—and I saw her, but she has gone away again, and I don't know why."

"I was boasting to the bishop only this morning," continues Miss Prescott, gravely, "that you had never told me a lie. Perhaps I was wrong to boast of what should be a simple duty, and this is my punishment. For I cannot see my way to believe you, Susie. You tell me what is an impossibility. Miss Anstey cannot have been in this garden a minute ago, and disappeared without any one observing her but yourself."

"And so the poor, sobbing little soul (which is as warm and full of love as ever a child's soul was) is dismissed coldly on suspicion of a fault of which she is not guilty, to pass twelve or more hours of solitude and tears. But she goes bravely up to her bedroom, with her Bible in her hands. She did see Lena in the garden, for she tells herself twenty times, although she cannot account for her sudden disappearance. And she slumbers peacefully, notwithstanding her unmerited punishment and the angels who watch over all of us unseen, guard thickly round her little cot that night."

"You have killed it in reality," she exclaims. "I don't care," says Lena, defiantly, though she looks rather frightened. "I am glad of it. I wanted it to be dead. It was a beast! I'll never have another dog—never. And if you bring Charlie here any more I'll kill him, too."

With which threat the bishop's daughter bursts into a flood of angry tears, and runs back to her father's house; and Susie, hugging her kitten closer than ever to her bosom, makes haste to carry him to a place of safety.

TOPICS FOR FARMERS

A DEPARTMENT PREPARED FOR OUR RURAL FRIENDS.

An English Shipping Experiment That May Help the Farmers—Commercial Fertilizer Can Be Kept—Care of Animals in Damp Weather.

A Shipping Experiment.

Every farmer in the United States ought to be interested in experiments which have been made during the past year by the Great Eastern Railroad Company of England to bring the farmers and market gardeners into direct communication with the consumer. The system brought into operation by the Great Eastern Railway enabled the farmers along its route to send produce by passenger train into London and suburban towns at the required rate of fourpence for twenty pounds, and one penny additional for every five pounds or part thereof up to sixty pounds. This includes free delivery to the consumer if within three miles of the station. A correspondent writes to the London Times that the result has exceeded all expectations, and that the average number of boxes sent under these special rates is about 5,000 per month, which failed to supply the demand. The company compiled a list of the farmers and market gardeners in their district who were ready to forward produce directly to the consumer. This list was freely circulated among London consumers, who corresponded with the farmer chosen and received produce fresh from the farm delivered at the door without the aid of a middleman. It is not possible that the railroads will take such an advanced step in this country without the aid of some outside influence. The grangers would do well to undertake to push the experiment along one or two lines of railroad for a test case. The transaction should be direct with the railroad companies with no added cost of an extra officered company who would be likely to take the lion's share of the profits. The express companies do much of the delivery now required by such trade, but their charges are too high. The railroad company could do it much cheaper and more direct and satisfactory.—Grange Homes.

Keeping Commercial Fertilizer.

Most farmers in purchasing commercial fertilizers buy only what are needed for immediate use. This is partly to escape losing the interest on investments not in use, but mainly because there is a popular idea that fertilizers deteriorate by exposure to the air. If they are kept from becoming wet they will be as good the second year as the first, except that absorption of moisture from damp air will make the mineral harder into lumps which will make it difficult to drill. The best way to keep any surplus of mineral fertilizer is to scatter it from time to time over the stable manure heaps and apply it with that. Both the stable manure and phosphate will be made more efficient by this combination, as each kind of fertilizer will supplement the deficiencies of the other.

Animals in Damp Weather.

Nearly all the animals on a farm are usually healthy when the weather is dry and cold, but dampness is disagreeable to them the same as to humans. They are subject to coughs, colds, rheumatism, etc., hence when the weather is damp they should have quarters that are dry and which do not permit cold draughts to flow over them. Leaves or cut straw as bedding will assist in absorbing the moisture and also prevent loss of warmth to a certain extent.

Exposing Potatoes to Sunlight.

Potatoes that are kept for eating should not lie long on the surface of the ground exposed to the sun, for if they are greened even slightly much of the potato must be cut with the peel or it will be bitter. The green tops of potatoes will sometimes be eaten by cows, they will give the bitter taste to the milk that is sometimes noticed in fall. Cows will not eat enough of them, however, to do themselves any injury. When the green of sunburned potatoes is cut away it carries with it the best part of the potato, as there is in nearly everything more nutrition on the outer surface of vegetables than in those less near to the sunlight. For seed potatoes the green color by sunshine is no disadvantage. It dries out the potato and makes the eyes push out stronger than they would if not so dried.

Grape Vines Near Houses.

There is no better place for a grape vine than near a dwelling house. If on the southeast or west side. The sunshine falling on the building gives part of its warmth to the wood or brick, and part of it is reflected back upon the vine. The warmth that is absorbed is given off at night and after cold weather comes. Besides, in a dwelling house some of the warmth of fires escapes through opened windows, giving the vine, planted so that its branches extend over the kitchen, several degrees higher temperature than vines have planted at a distance from any dwelling. Varieties of grapes that will not ripen in the open air will ripen thoroughly if given the slight protection, which the warmth from a summer kitchen affords.

Careful Fruit Packing Pays.

C. L. Hartshorn says his fruit is always carefully packed and graded and usually placed in the cellar. When packed each barrel contains the same grade of apple throughout. He had occasion to make a shipment of a few barrels of apples to St. Louis, where a good price was obtained. He wrote a letter and placed it in the middle of the barrel asking the consumer re-

ceiving the fruit to write him, stating the quality, condition and what the St. Louis market demanded. In a short time he received a letter from a St. Louis commission merchant praising the quality and packing and saying how many more barrels of such fruit he had to sell. Mr. Hartshorn had no more to sell, but felt convinced that the high price received and the demand for more fully paid for the best of packing. This plan might well be followed by other fruit growers who have a large picking, by sending sample barrels with similar letters. The importance of selecting only the finest fruit for shipment was never greater than now. Another point is to distribute the fruit so as not to glut the big cities.—Orange Judd Farmer.

Effects of Impure Water.

Most of the best dairy regions of the country are where there are natural springs of pure water. These sections are usually good for grass, but we have always thought that the superior water helped the dairyman to make a better quality of butter, and so command the highest price in the market. Wherever the water is not good, and it is considered desirable to engage in dairying, the difficulty may be remedied by sinking driven wells with casing deep enough to find supplies of water as clear and pure as from any spring. This water will be of the same temperature winter and summer, and should be warmed before being offered to milk cows, as nothing checks milk supply more quickly than giving cows water so cold that they will not drink what they require.

Salt and Seeds.

Wherever salt is sown so that it comes in contact with germinating seeds it will rot and destroy them. The first germ of seeds is very tender, and as it starts out the seed gives out some moisture which dissolves the salt. The effect of very small quantities of salt is to decompose vegetation of all kinds. A large amount might pickle it and prevent decomposition. But either small or large it is destructive of the germs of vegetable life. But if there is a great deal of rainfall the salt is dissipated, and so mixed with surrounding soil that little injury to the seed is produced.

Foot-Rot.

Foot-rot is quite as contagious a disease as the scab, but it is not much considered as such. It is only on wet lands that it is severe, but by contagion it is liable to spread to the dryest pastures. It is as easily controlled as the scab, which by the requisite measures may be easily eradicated. When this is done on any farm or range all that remains is to be sure not to bring diseased sheep on the land to re-infect the flock.

Odds and Ends.

Oyster shell is good to clean the firebrick of the stove. Lay a number of them on top of the hot coals, and when the fire burns down it will be found that all the cinders have been scoured off the bricks.

Bed clothing hangs at either side nowadays, after the fashion of long ago. This applies to the plain spreads, as well as the handsome sets of tanned or ruffled Swiss and Irish point that are now in vogue.

Flour cannot be too cold for pastry, cookies or kindred doughs, while for yeast bread should be warm enough to favor the growth of the yeast plant. For the same reason warm water should be used with yeast, while with cream of tartar and soda it would hasten the escape of gas, and cold liquids only are allowable.

Cleanse light summer woens, which are easily soiled, with finely powdered French chalk. The soiled parts should be thickly covered with the chalk, which should be allowed to remain for one or two days, and then remove with a camel's hair velvet brush. In most cases this treatment will cause the spots to disappear.

Farm Notes.

Bees do their own ventilating, by standing about the entrance at such a distance apart as will allow a free use of their wings, and, by working them, produce a current of air through the hive.

Spread the onions on shelves in thin layers and do not disturb them until they are wanted for use. Onions may freeze and thaw several times during the winter without injury if they are not handled.

In Russia sunflowers are made special crops, the seed being ground and used for cattle, the same as cottonseed meal, and such food is not only wholesome, but gives excellent results in milk and butter.

Beets, carrots and turnips keep in good condition in winter if stored in mounds, and apples should remain in good condition all through the winter in a dry cellar. The chief obstacle is not the cold, but usually too much warmth.

Cleanliness may not be a cholera cure, says a writer, but if the hog growers of the country would come to recognize and act upon the fact that the hog neither enjoys nor thrives upon filth, it would do much toward reducing the losses of hogs by disease.

Professor Blount, of the Colorado Station, says a bushel of clean, sound wheat of average size contains 822,000 kernels, and that half this number, or half a bushel, is ample seedling for an acre under irrigation, which insures perfect germination. He finds larger yields of finer wheat from this amount than from any thicker seeding.

The fine grass of the hills is especially attractive to sheep, but the long-wool breeds are at home in the rich, level pastures, and do well if the soil is dry. They are not such rovers as the merinos, but are content to fill up, lie down and fatten and let their wool grow. They make wool and mutton rapidly and profitably.

(To be continued.)