



Save the Trees.

Another warning against the destruction of forests has recently come from the island of Trinidad. The officers of the Royal Botanic Gardens there report that the rainfall has been steadily decreasing for thirty or more years, and that if the present rate of decrease should continue, that beautiful island would, within a measurable length of time, become as barren as Sahara. Destruction of forests is declared to be the cause of the decrease of rain.

Pococatepetl's Rabbits.

One would hardly look for a new species of rabbit high up on the sides of a great volcanic mountain. Yet Dr. C. H. Merriam has recently described just such an animal, which was discovered at an elevation of 10,000 feet, on the flank of Pococatepetl, the "mountain that smokes," near the City of Mexico. It is remarkably small, does not jump like an ordinary rabbit but runs on all fours, possesses no tail, has short ears, and lives on the grass covering the slopes of the mountain below the region of snow and volcanic sand.

Effect of Electricity on Seeds.

Experiments recently made at the Massachusetts Agricultural College tend to prove that electricity exerts an appreciable influence on the germination of seeds. When a current of the proper strength is applied it hastens the germination and early growth of the sprouts, but its influence diminishes as the plant increases in size. Seeds subjected to a single application of electricity show the effect for only a few hours, but if the current is applied hourly it acts constantly, except that as the plants mature the beneficial effect is gradually lost.

One of the Nearest Stars.

There are very few stars whose distance is even approximately known to astronomers. Moreover, the different estimates of the distances of these few vary by large amounts. The nearest known star is "Alpha" in the constellation Centaur, not visible from the northern lands of the earth, and one of the next nearest is a little star in the northern constellation Cygnus, called "61 Cygni." The latest determination of the parallax of this star by Mr. H. S. Davis, of New York, makes its distance fifty-three millions of millions of miles. This is about eighteen millions of millions of miles less than the distance derived from Professor Hall's measurement some ten years ago.

A Curious Villa of Ants.

Mr. George M. Brook describes, in Popular Science News, a singular community of small brown ants observed by him inhabiting little dome-shaped structures, made of wood fibre, and stuck on the panels of a fence and the neighboring shoots of a Virginia creeper. These shelters, which presented the appearance of a little village, were from a quarter of an inch to an inch in diameter, and about an eighth of an inch high. On breaking them open Mr. Brook found them occupied by ants. During a shower, he says, the little houses were quite full of ants. He saw the industrious creatures at work building and repairing their singular shelters. The Virginia creeper was inhabited by many aphides, or plant lice, which, it is well known, furnish a secretion that ants are very fond of, and which is sometimes likened to the milk of cows. When, with the growth of the creeper, the location in which the aphides abounded was changed, the ants abandoned their original huts and constructed new ones nearer to their "herd of cows." The permanent home of the ants was in a pile of boards several yards away.

An Extraordinary Eruption.

A very singular phenomenon occurred last winter in Iceland. Along the southeast, near the center of the southern shore of the island, there is a broad level region called the Skeldara Sands, bordered by glaciers descending from the mountains. A postman crossing the sands was startled by a long, growling sound issuing from the glacier two miles away. Then he saw masses of ice shooting into the air, followed by a flood of water and ice pouring across the sands. Being on horseback he quickly got out of the reach of danger. After six days, on again visiting the spot, he found the sands covered with a "belt of ice-waves" reaching from the glacier to the sea, a distance of twenty-five miles. The precise cause of the eruption, which apparently took place underneath the glacier, is not known, but according to a report in Nature, it is believed to have some connection with the great earthquakes that shook Iceland last summer.

He Saved His Master.

A letter to the Philadelphia Times from Vicksburg, Miss., reports that a dog in that city has made a handsome service shaft for a river-plant, a Mr. Phillips, on which is the following inscription: "To Bruno, a good dog, a faithful friend, a wise counselor, this monument is erected by his grateful master." The story of Bruno is as follows: Mr. Phillips was on his way to the Philadelphia Times office at Vicksburg, Miss., when he was stopped by a dog barking and barking in such a strange way that his master at length concluded to leave him to himself, and went on alone. Now it chanced that by reason of a little elevation near this point on the river-front, the portion of levee surrounding it was considered the soundest on the whole plantation. In view of this fact Phillips had selected it as a point of observation from which to get a bird's-eye view of the place. As he began to climb the embankment for this purpose, he was startled to hear a dog barking close behind him, and to feel Bruno tugging at his heels. Fearing the faithful animal had gone mad, Mr. Phillips tried to kick him off, hoping to mount the levee and so escape beyond his reach, but the dog was too quick for him. Springing up on his haunches, Bruno grasped the collar of his master's loose flannel shirt, and by main force succeeded in pushing him down the embankment. In fact, so sudden was the spring and so frantic were the dog's efforts that man and dog were eight or ten feet back from the levee before Phillips recovered his equilibrium. When he did so, he grasped the dog with both hands around the neck and tried to choke him off. At that moment he heard a heavy splash, the meaning of which he knew only too well, and looked up to see the levee and the solid earth upon which he had but a moment before been standing slough off and drop into the maddened, murky water. Mr. Phillips' feelings may be better imagined than described when he saw the yawning breach reaching within a few feet of him, and realized how valiantly his brave dog, whose keener instincts had warned him of approaching danger, had fought to save him from a watery grave.

Test of Human Nature.

When Nansen and his men were frozen into the ice in the Fram in September, 1893, they had only to wait, apparently in the same spot, until the slowly drifting ice should carry them somewhere—Poleward, they hoped, but possibly not in that direction. Seeing nothing but the dead ice about them, feeling no onward movement, they must simply look in one another's faces and wait, possibly for as many years or months as remained of their lives. As a matter of fact, the whole company remained there, frozen in, until the 14th of March, 1894, when Nansen and one of the men left in sledges in an adventurous attempt to reach the Pole, leaving the patient captain and crew to wait longer still. It is remarked that men of the Latin races seldom attempt to find the Pole. As a race they have not the patience to wait and wait, as an Arctic explorer must often do. Their nature makes it necessary for them to go somewhere, and do something all the time. Americans appear to possess the physical patience necessary for these terrible expeditions, but it has been noticed that the polar expeditions of our countrymen have left behind them a distressing number of jealousies and hatreds on the part of those who have had part in them. In view of this fact, a remark of one of the members of the Nansen expedition is worthy of notice. He had said that he thought Norwegians were the fittest of all men to go on Arctic expeditions. "Why is that so?" he was asked. "Because," he replied, "two Norwegians are capable of living, face to face, on a cake of ice for three years without hating each other; and I do not believe there is another nation of whom as much could be said."

He Revived Instantly.

It was a sad scene. The old man lay on his bed, and by him sat the faithful wife, holding his worn hand in hers and forcing back the tears to greet his wandering look with a smile. She spoke words of comfort and of hope. But he felt the cold hand falling on him, and he turned his weary eyes up to her pale, worn face. "Jeanie, dear wife, I am going."

Like Papa's.

A 6-year-old was seated in a barber's chair. "Well, my little man, how would you like your hair cut?" "Oh, like papa's; with a little round hole at the top."

Easy Victims in Georgia.

A plausible young man accosted a Georgia farmer one day last week, and in a very little while induced him to pay \$50 for a machine which he assured him would turn out bread and \$30 bills by simply turning a crank.

front to see if the levee was holding in good condition. His dog Bruno accompanied him. As they approached a certain point Bruno, for some unaccountable reason, refused to advance, and began to bark and howl in a most distressing manner. Mr. Phillips, who was very fond of his pet, tried in every way to pacify him, while insisting upon continuing his journey; but the dog refused to be comforted whining and barking in such a strange way that his master at length concluded to leave him to himself, and went on alone.

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If this is true, it may be well for the rest of the world to leave the hard task of Arctic exploration entirely to the sailors and men of science of Norway.

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"Jeanie, dear wife, I am going." "Oh, no, John, not yet, not yet." "Yes, dear wife," he closed his eyes, "the end is near. The world—the world grows darker around me, gathering thicker and thicker, and I seem to hear sweet music."

"No, no, dear John; that's the brass band in the street." "What?" said the dying man. "Have those scoundrels dared to come round here when they know I am dying? Give me my bootjack, I'll let 'em see!" and in a towering rage the old man jumped from his bed, and, before his wife could think, he had opened the window and had shied the bootjack at the band. "I've hit that Dutch leader, anyway," said he, and went back to bed and got better.—T. d. Bits.

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Table of Interest—The dinner table.

AGRICULTURAL NEWS

THINGS PERTAINING TO THE FARM AND HOME.

The Price of Hay Is Regulated by Its Color, Not Its Worth—Green Fodder Good for Stock—Keep the Fence Corners Clean.

Marketable Hay.

There may be markets that will take the richest hay at a sufficient advance in price to repay the farmer for furnishing it, but I know of none, and am sure that there are not many. It sells by color, and there is more danger of having some of the hay blackened and dusty when the grass is cut in full bloom than when it is sufficiently mature to require only a short exposure to the weather in the swath. It is a big and risky job to cure a large amount of grass that is as full of sap as timothy in full bloom, and consumers in most local markets are not inclined to pay for all the extra labor, risk and loss in weight of the total product due to early cutting. Dead-ripe timothy is not wanted, of course, and its color condemns it, but there is a middle ground which should be taken. There may be glory in furnishing the market with timothy cut when in full bloom, but there is rarely any profit from the extra effort and risk. In the long run just as attractive and a more profitable lot of hay may be put upon the market when the bloom is shed. The feeding value is less, but this is doing unto others as they would do unto us, which is the silver rule of commercial transactions.—National Stockman.

Ventilation of Horse Stables.

It takes a good deal of care to keep the horse stable sweet and fit for healthy living during the summer season. Unless it is quickly covered with earth, gypsum or something equally efficient in absorbing odors, the decomposing manure will not only waste ammonia, but it will be worse than wasted because it will injure the health and especially the eyesight of animals. Many a horse has gone blind because of the ammonia affecting his eyes in poorly ventilated and dark stables. This is the chief advantage of underground stables in summer. They are cool, but it is very hard to keep them well ventilated and without offensive smell. But if the underground stable has, as it should, a cement floor, it may be worse than the overground stable that has a plank floor filled with the urine and other secretions that have soaked into it.

Green Fodder for Cows.

Early fodder-corn, when eaten by the cows, will make a satisfying feed, and it will also largely increase the quantity of milk. Fodder feed when half grown or immature is very poor feed, as it is mostly water. The cows will consume a large amount of such fodder, and give a very small quantity of milk. Give to each cow four quarts of milk feed, in the morning, when they are being milked; then turn to pasture. At noon give each cow an armful of the fodder, spread over the pasture, and the same quantity of milk feed made into slop, and one armful of fodder; after the milk feed and fodder is eaten, turn out upon the night pasture. If the cows have to be kept in the stable-yard, give them, in addition, a small forkful of oat hay, or well-cured clover hay. The cows must be given all they can eat. On such a ration, good cows will average from two and one-half to three gallons of milk per day all through the summer, and the milk will be of good flavor and rich in cream. As fast as the fodder-corn is cut off, the ground between the rows should be well worked up with the cultivator, and then run out with the one-horse plow, making the furrow about five inches in depth, and sowed to fodder-corn. Sow one large handful of bone phosphate to every three feet of row, and about twelve grains of corn to the foot. Cover the corn as fast as it is sown.

Remedy for Pear Blight.

A remedy for pear blight, and one that is very important if it accomplishes what is claimed for it, is given by a fruit-grower of thirty years' experience. He states that he uses salt, according to the size of the tree, from one quart to one bushel, evenly spread on the ground, extending beyond the range of the roots. It should be done in the spring, just as the frost is leaving the ground, so that the fiber roots will carry it to the sap. The salt destroys the germs of the disease. It should be done at least before the buds begin to swell, and the fruit-grower who gives the valuable information advises each grower to try the remedy with a single tree, and the cost of the experiment will not be over 10 cents. The remedy is so simple that any one can give it a test, and as the salt will destroy some of the insect enemies it will at least prove beneficial in that respect.

To Kill the Hornfly.

The best way of fighting the troublesome horn fly is by the application to the cattle of an emulsion of some kind which will kill the insects already there, and keep others away. Fish oil, to which a little carbolic acid—a pint of a tablespoonful of the acid to a quart of the oil—has been added, makes a very cheap and effective application. Keroline emulsion used as a spray is also good, being especially adapted to large herds. The emulsion is made by adding a half pound of soap dissolved in a gallon of boiling water to two gallons of kerosene. This emulsion, when thoroughly mixed and allowed to cool, assumes the consistency of clabber milk; when used as a spray, it is diluted with water in which tobacco stems have been boiled.—Farm News.

Sweet Potatoes.

Before the vines start to run, cultivate the ground between the rows, and, after a few days, throw a furrow to the plants on each side of every row. Take the hoe and draw the earth up close to the vines, and cut out all weeds. The after cultivation consists in stirring the ground between the rows with the cultivator set to run shallow, and of hoeing the ridges and preventing the vines from rooting at the joints. As soon as the vines commence to turn yellow the potatoes are ripe, and can be dug and sent to market. It is more profitable to dig and sell direct from the field.

Advantages of Well-Bred Stock.

It is particularly in the time when all farming is least prosperous that those who have been careful to secure only the best bred animals have the advantage. The first effect of a decline in prices is to make the scrub animal unsalable at any price. All through the period of depression the scrub stock farmers are changing from poor or inferior stock to that which is better. By the time they have all secured the best stock the times will have improved so as to make farming profitable again. It is really a case of cause and effect, though not often recognized as such.

Soil for Radishes.

To grow good radishes, one needs a sandy soil, thoroughly fertilized. It is practically impossible to grow a fine quality on a heavy soil. The roots grow very slowly, and they become tough, and, in many cases, wormy. A loamy soil will do very well, but a heavy clay is not suitable.

Eggs by the Pound.

If eggs were sold by the pound it would revolutionize the breeds. As we have before shown, the hen that lays the largest number of eggs may

not really be performing as much service as one that lays fewer eggs, but which are of larger size. Suppose a hen lays 120 eggs in a year, the eggs averaging ten to the pound, her product would be twelve pounds of eggs in one year. Now, let us suppose that another hen in the flock laid 104 eggs, the eggs averaging eight to the pound. In the first case the hen that produced 120 eggs would be the most valuable, yet she has not performed as much service as the one which produced but 104 eggs, as the eggs of the latter are a pound heavier, and, if eggs were sold by weight, she would give a larger profit on fewer eggs. Selling eggs by weight gives both the producer and the consumer a fair sale and purchase, and farmers would begin to select the breeds that produced large eggs. They would then be compelled to improve their flocks in order to secure the best market prices for their eggs.—Poultry Keeper.

Blue Grass Pasture.

There is no better pasture grass than the blue grass, which in some parts of the country is known as June grass. Its roots run near the surface, and the pasture is therefore sweet and good so soon as the grass starts. In midsummer these shallow roots have another great advantage. They are benefited by the light rains which only penetrate one or two inches, and which will not reach down to the clovers, whose roots strike down into the subsoil in time of drought, and the clover grown then is best. With June grass the best pasture is in June, as later it will probably be dried out too much.

Clearing Fence Corners.

Nothing more clearly shows the painstaking and careful farmer than to have fence corners between fields or along the roadside kept free from weeds, grass or shrubs. As a rule all the old-time fence corners were kept scrupulously clean. A good deal of valuable hay was made from what the scythe reached in and cut there. But when the horse mower and the self-binding reaper came into use, it every year became harder to find anybody who could be hired to clear out the fence corners. The result was that the ax rather than the scythe was required, and the growth, instead of being restricted to fence corners, encroached each year more on the cultivated fields.

A Farmer's Outfit.

The better machinist a farmer is, the more time and money will be saved. He should understand thoroughly every machine he uses, and be able to repair all but the most serious breaks for himself, and avoid being dependent upon paid service. It is wise forethought to keep on hand duplicates of such parts as are most liable to break, thus saving valuable time, especially in the haying season. A well-equipped tool chest, with screws and nails of all kinds, should be a part of every farmer's outfit. If one of the boys shows a taste for mechanics, give him a chance to develop it. He will be a valuable man to have in the neighborhood, and will probably be able to turn many an honest penny by helping out his less skillful neighbors.—Massachusetts Ploughman.

To Word Off Fruit Rot.

When fruit rot has attacked the peach crop, the best method is to remove and burn all dried or mummified fruit from the trees, in winter, and spray early in spring with bluestone. When the fruit buds begin to swell, spray with Bordeaux mixture, and again just before the blossoms open. Repeat the spraying when the blossoms are falling, adding a little paris green to keep off the curculio. Two weeks later, spray again. As the Bordeaux mixture coats the fruit with the lime mixture, use copper acetate, a colorless solution, for the last two sprayings. In Delaware, a ten-fold increase of sound fruit has been obtained by this process, at a cost of about 12 cents per tree.—The Agriculturist.



CAN - AWKWARD - POSITION.

"Do you think two girls ought to be born so exactly alike?"

said Charlie Dacre, ruefully twisting up a cigar.

"The other man laughed. 'Are you talking of those two Dennison girls? They're not exactly alike.'"

"It's all very well for you, but I haven't your long sight, and I declare to you if I see either of them at a little distance, or in a bad light, I can't tell which is which. I am going to a party to-night, given by the respected parents of my Dennison, and I positively dread it."

"Perhaps they play tricks on you," said Ballantyne. "One of them is rather skittish."

Charlie got himself up that night with extraordinary care, and as he was a good-looking fellow he presented a rather striking appearance as he entered Mrs. Dennison's drawing room. He had been detained, so that most of the guests had arrived when he came, and his inamorata was nowhere to be seen. But shortly after he had paid his respects to the host and hostess the daughter of the house, prettily dressed in white and blue, came up. Dacre begged for a dance—two dances.

"I'm so sorry," said she, "but I've nothing vacant till the lancers. You're a little late, Mr. Dacre, you see," with a slight accent of reproach as she gave him her card. Charlie apologized in the humblest terms, and the girl bestowed a smile on him as she was led away.

Dacre went to seek her in good time for his lancers. She sat on an ottoman in a distant part of the room, where the drooping folds of a curtain formed a shade from the glare of the lights. The blue and white of her filmy gown stood out against the dark background. Dacre hastened across the room to her.

"Miss Dennison, my dance," he said, eagerly. "May I?"

She turned her pretty face and arched her eyebrows in surprise. "Yes," said Charlie, "the lancers—you promised—O! beg your pardon, you're your cousin—I mean, the other Miss Dennison—and, of course, I haven't seen you before."

Then, recovering from his confusion before the young lady could speak, he added: "I hope I'm not too late to get a dance, Miss Dennison?"

Having secured this, he sought the other Isabel.

"Why in the fiend's name do they dress alike?" he muttered, in nervous fear of another mistake. He might be continually coming across the one he didn't want, like a recruiting decimal. Several times he bore down on a fair girl in blue and white, but turned away, deciding that he had only come on an Isabel in another place. The lancers had begun—it was in full swing before he came suddenly on a sofa where sat the Isabel.

"Miss Dennison," he stammered, "I'm so sorry—"

"Pray don't apologize," said she coldly; "I assure you the delay is not of the slightest moment."

"Indeed, it was quite unintentional," said the unfortunate Charlie, in despair. "I have been looking for you—"

"I have been sitting here the last ten minutes, and you passed me just now." "I saw a blue and white dress," acknowledged Charlie, "but some people came between it and me. Won't you forgive me and dance this? It isn't too late."

"I think my mother wants me," said Isabel, rising with dignity. "May I take you to her?" "No, thank you."

Charlie only got pardoned when everybody was going. He was mad with himself, but could not bring himself to acknowledge the real reason of his apparent neglect. He was sensitive about these constant mistakes. They went on happening, of course, the one Isabel laughing at him, which he dreaded; the other turning haughty and offended. He offered some flowers to a Dennison girl one day and she said demurely, "Are you sure they were meant for me?"

"Whom else could they be meant for?" said Charlie, sentimentally. "My cousin, perhaps—she's over there," said the girl, merrily. Dacre flushed in unutterable confusion, and took back the flowers, scarcely knowing what he did. And when he turned away he met the scornful eyes of a girl who must be the Isabel he wanted, because the girl he had left wasn't she. It was quite impossible to present the flowers, and he made a crestfallen escape as soon as he could.

"Hang it! I'll end all this!" he said, angrily, one day. "But I shall have to be careful, if I am happily successful, that I marry the right girl. It would be awfully awkward if I didn't."

His opportunity seemed thrown into his hands, for he was invited to spend a week at a country house where the

Isabel was also going with her mother. He sat next her at dinner, and to his great delight saw no other Isabel.

"We shall be a larger party to-morrow," said the young lady; "my cousins are coming." "The—the Dennisons?" Charlie almost gasped.

"Not all of them—only Isabel and Lucy." "This was comforting! And both Isabels had such an odious habit of dressing in the same colors! Why didn't they wear different colored ribbons, like French twins?"

He got along fairly well, with great care and caution. One evening he saw Isabel Dennison entering the library. He knew it was his one, because she had on a gray dress, whereas her cousin had worn a green one during the day; otherwise it was too dark to see her features. He followed her into the room.

"The nicest time for a chat," he said and she made a movement as if to leave the room, flitting toward a further door.

"Yes, but I'm afraid I can't stay," she said. "I only came to fetch something I left here."

"Well—but don't go—stay a minute," said Dacre, entreatingly. He had no doubt at all about his accuracy as to identity; her desire to escape from him was a sure proof, let alone others; for it was precisely the desire she had shown in the last few days, and which he took as a favorable sign. "Miss Dennison—Isabel—I'm mistaken in thinking—in hoping—you know—you surely must know—that I love you—"

The girl had stood still for a second, while Charlie rushed on with his declaration, but she interrupted him hastily—

"Indeed, Mr. Dacre, I'm afraid—"

"Don't say that," said Charlie, going nearer; "all those weeks in town—down here, when we have been thrown so much together—I surely have not misunderstood—"

A stifled sound came from the dim figure before him, whether laugh or what, he could not tell; but he suddenly started back, and in so doing came face to face with another Isabel in a gray dress.

If the earth had opened and swallowed him Charlie would have been thankful. This was the crowning disaster. Neither Isabel stirred; which, in heaven's name, was which? To whom had he proposed? How should he ever know he had got the right Isabel?

He recognized after the first wild movement that he must save the situation. He approached the newcomer, who eyed him disdainfully.

"Which Miss Dennison do you intend to address, Mr. Dacre?" she demanded stiffly.

"How the deuce should I know? It is nearly dark and you both evade me." "You had better pursue your conversation with the lady you seem to recognize best, and I will retire."

The other Isabel sprang forward. "Don't be a goose, cousin," said she, half laughing, "and you, Mr. Dacre, wait a minute. You know very well, Isabel, it's all a mistake, and I'd have interrupted Mr. Dacre before only he was so impetuous I had no time. He didn't mean me at all—"

"Mr. Dacre doesn't seem to know whom he means," said the offended Isabel.

"I know very well when I can see them," murmured Charlie, nearly crushed. "Here goes for a light."

But when a blaze of light illumined the room only one Isabel remained. Dacre took her hand.

"You are the one," he said. "Are you quite sure?" she asked, archly. "Ah! that's cruel! Of course, I am. What will you say to me, Isabel—for give me and—"

"Love you," whispered Isabel.

"I hope it's the right one," said Ballantyne, when the marriage ceremony was over; "but upon my word, he was almost taking the bridemaid's hand instead of the bride's"—London Star.

Both Wrong.

The Toronto Saturday Night tells of a man who kept a ferret being obliged to go into the country, leaving the cage with the ferret in charge of a neighbor till he should return.

The neighbor incautiously opened the cagedoor, and the ferret escaped, whereupon the owner brought a claim against him for damages.

The following was the decision of the learned magistrate before whom the case was brought.

"No doubt," he said to the neighbor, "no doubt you were wrong to open the cage-door, but, turning to the owner, 'you were wrong, too. Why did you not clip the brute's wings?'"