

chops, etc., are now made of paper in various designs and sizes; napkins, doilies, and many pretty, inexpensive table ornaments, are also shown. Wooden dishes, of various sizes and designs, are also to be had; paper cake boxes, and other conveniences do away with the basket of heavy, breakable dishes which, in former days, filled the gudewife's picnic hours with a nightmare of dread, and, only too often, her home-returning basket with remnants of cracked, chipped or broken china. With care, many of these paper and wooden dishes may be made to serve several occasions, and they are quite inexpensive.

#### Farm Sanitation

A correspondent, referring to an article which appeared under the above heading in a recent issue of *The Commoner*, asks for a method, practical and inexpensive, by which the evils spoken of may be remedied, and the wasted fertilizers saved. As to the house-slops and decomposable garbage, the question is fairly answered in an article entitled "Potting Soil," published in this department in *The Commoner* of June 26. Any one who has tried this method will attest its practical worth.

For the larger evil, I must quote from a higher authority on such matters than I profess to be, but I have some knowledge of the value and availability of the method recommended. It is both practical and inexpensive, but requires some little regular effort on the part of each member of the family. Leaving out all other considerations, the proposed reform should secure the best efforts of all sensible men and women, for the single reason that it will secure relief from an evil, the tolerance of which would almost justify Darwin's theory of our origin.

While the disinfecting power of the soil has been known certainly since the time of Moses, and we know not how much earlier, the superiority of dry earth for this purpose seems not to be generally known in our day, or, at least, not much practical use has

#### CHANGE

##### Quit Coffee and Get Well.

A woman's coffee experience is interesting. "For two weeks at a time I have taken no food but skim milk, for solid food would ferment and cause such a pressure of gas and such distress that I could hardly breathe at times, also excruciating pain and heart palpitation and all the time I was so nervous and restless.

"From childhood up I had been a coffee and tea drinker and for the past 20 years I have been trying different physicians, but could get only temporary relief. Then I read an article telling how some one had been cured by leaving off coffee and drinking Postum and it seemed so pleasant just to read about good health I decided to try Postum in place of coffee.

"I made the change from coffee to Postum and such a change there is in me that I don't feel like the same person. We all found Postum delicious and like it better than coffee. My health now is wonderfully good.

"As soon as I made the shift from coffee to Postum I got better and now all of my troubles are gone. I am fleshy, my food assimilates, the pressure in the chest and palpitation are all gone, my bowels are regular, have no more stomach trouble and my headaches are gone. Remember I did not use medicines at all—just left off coffee and drank Postum steadily." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Send to the Co. for particulars by mail of extension of time on the \$7,500.00 cooks contest for 735 money prizes.

been made of the knowledge in the form of the earth-closet. Of this, besides the stationary closet for use outside of the house, or which may be set up in any unused room or shed, there may be a portable form adapted for use in any bedroom. With close attention and a regular and liberal use of the dry earth, every particle of odor may be prevented. For those who do not care to go to the expense of mechanical contrivance, it will be all sufficient to have a box of dry, sifted earth, with a tin scoop with which to throw down the requisite quantity of dust after each use. The earth for use must be dust-dry, sifted of its coarser particles and rubbish. It can be gathered from the roadside, or plowed ground, and stored in boxes, barrels, or sheds, taken up during the hot dry months. Placed under shelter, it will remain sufficiently dry throughout the year. The soil may be sifted, a boxful at a time, as needed, and the earth-closet, intelligently managed, furnishes a means of disposing of offensive excrement without nuisance, and, apparently, without detriment to health. Ashes of anthracite coal are believed to be as good an absorbent material as earth, and even soft coal ashes, mixed with an equal part of earth, may be used, thus giving a value to what is now considered a nuisance.

#### Earth-Closet For The Farm

For this, a house of any desired size or pattern may be built, with seat arranged as for an ordinary closet. Beneath the seat, instead of a vault, there should be a box, mounted on a flat truck, with four small wheels, to which a handle may be hooked by which it may be drawn away when necessary to be emptied. A door should be made in the back of the closet beneath the seat large enough to receive the truck and the box; this door should be hung upon hinges at the top, so it may open upward and be secured with a hook and staple while open, and by another at the bottom when shut. A box of dry, sifted earth or coal ashes is to be kept in the closet, and a tin scoop, holding about two quarts (which may be made by shaping an old tin pail or fruit can with tinner's shears), provided by which to handle the soil. A few inches of dry earth are placed in the bottom of the box or receptacle under the seat, and each time the closet is used a scoopful from the dust-box is thrown over the deposit, completely covering it. When the box is filled it should be removed, and emptied where it may be kept quite dry, until used for fertilizing purposes. The absorbent must not be applied fresh to the land. It should be first thrown into a bin, or boxes or barrels, in which it will retain moisture long enough for perfect fermentation. The absence of fetor, even with prolonged keeping, shows that the process which goes on in the mixture is some kind of combination between the earth and the organic matter, a sort of disintegration, rather than of decomposition in the ordinary sense, as everything, even paper, becomes incorporated with the soil.

The deposits, when taken from the closet, should be thrown into a compact heap under shelter, and, if necessary, moistened a little, and left to ferment. After a sufficient time, the heap should be shoveled over, and left to undergo a second fermentation. When ready for use, the earth will be nearly indistinguishable from soil newly gathered from the field, will be perfectly clean, free from smell, and may be kept, carried about and applied whenever and wherever wanted. The plan is well worth a trial.

#### The Good Old Days

Agriculture, as we know it, can scarcely be considered to have existed

in the eighteenth century, in America. The plow was little used; the hoe was the implement of industry; made at the plantation smithy, the blade was ill-formed and clumsy, and the handle was a sapling with the bark left on. After a succession of crops had exhausted the soil the cows were sometimes penned upon it. The use and value of manures was little regarded, and the barn was sometimes removed to get it out of the way of heaps of manure, because the owner would not go to the expense of removing these accumulations and putting them on his field.

In Virginia, the "poor whites," who had formerly been indentured servants, were the most lazy, the most idle, the most shiftless and worthless of men; their habitations were mere huts, the chimneys were of logs, as were their huts, the openings between the logs being chinked with clay. The walls had no plaster, the windows had no glass—if, indeed, there were even openings dignified by that name—and their furniture was such as they made themselves. Their grain was thrashed by driving horses over it in the open field; when they ground it, they used a rude pestle and mortar, or placed it in the hollow of one stone and beat it with another.

The Massachusetts farmer who witnessed the revolution plowed his ground with a wooden plow, sowed his grain broadcast by hand, and, when ripe, cut it with the scythe and thrashed it on the barn floor with a flail. His house was not painted, and his floor was not carpeted. Light was furnished by candles of home manufacture; cavernous fire-places supplied the heat, and the smoke, also; the family wore homespun, and, if linen were wanted, the flax must be sown, weeded, pulled, and rotted, broken and swinged, for all of which processes nearly a year was required before the flax was ready for spinning, bleaching on the grass and making for wearing. If woollens were wanted, sheep were sheared, the wool washed, dyed, spun and woven, and the garment made at home by hand. These conditions continued after the republic had been established, and were not measurably ameliorated until the nineteenth century was well advanced. In many parts of the country at the present time similar conditions prevail.

#### The Plebian Potato.

Frank H. Mason, the American consul general at Berlin, has made a full and interesting report to the state department upon "The Potato as a Source of Wealth in Germany." He shows the immense increase in the growing of this vegetable within the last few years and its various uses as human food, feed for domestic animals and its alcoholic and starch producing qualities. In 1901 something over 12 per cent of the arable land of the German empire was planted in potatoes, and the crop was valued at \$95,000,000.

The potato has had an eventful history since it was discovered by the Spaniards in the beginning of the sixteenth century and carried by them from Peru to Spain.

Like its cousin, the tomato, it was at first regarded with great suspicion and was cultivated as a curiosity and not as an article of food. Sir John Hawkins, Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh all carried it to England, and it was the latter who first planted it on his Munster estates in Ireland, where it soon took root and flourished. There it soon became the principal article of food for the peasantry, so easily was it cultivated and so abundant was its production. From

Ireland it was carried to other parts of Europe and early acquired the name of the "Irish potato," by which it is still known, even in this country, from which it was first taken.

It was France that first taught the world how to cook the potato in more than one way, and it was Frederick the Great who introduced it into Prussia, where it has flourished, as Mr. Mason's report shows, only a little less than in Ireland.

As a food the potato has long ranked next to wheat as a necessity of the table, though it contains but a sixth of wheat's nutritive qualities. But it has also had its period of banishment. In France it was long supposed to be the cause of leprosy and fevers, and it was forbidden to those suffering from gout, rheumatism and diabetes. Lately, however, Professor Moses of Toulouse, has come out strongly in favor of the potato as an article of diet. He declares that it is not only harmless, but that it is beneficial in kidney diseases on account of the water and organic salts contained in it, forming an alkali which nourishes the person while curing the disease.

The value of the potato, however, consists not alone in its food qualities. From it starch, dextrine, sugar and alcohol are derived in commercial quantities, particularly starch and alcohol. Its importance as a crop for farmers, therefore, can hardly be over-estimated.—Chicago Journal.

#### The Wiltbank Claim.

It is possible that the heirs of John Wiltbank can prove that the right to take possession of the cracked Liberty Bell accrued to their ancestors in 1828. The bell was cracked, according to Bradshaw's history of it, in 1824, while being rung violently on the occasion of Lafayette's visit to this city in that year. It was not wholly disabled until some months later, and John Wiltbank was given the contract of furnishing a new bell. His bill for casting and putting in place the new bell was \$1,400, but councils made him throw off \$400 in allowance for the material of the old bell, which thereby became his had he chosen to take possession of it.

But it looks as though John Wiltbank and his descendants have slept on their rights. Mr. Wiltbank being more appreciative than councils of the bell's history and its future value as a relic, refused to destroy it. He left it in the city's possession and for a long time it was stowed away as though it was mere junk. Later its value was recognized and it was placed in a position far more suitable for such a relic, and it has been held in honor ever since.

The Wiltbank claim is, therefore, stale. Whatever validity it ever had is certainly outlawed by this time, the city of Philadelphia having been in the peaceable and quiet enjoyment of the cracked bell for three-quarters of a century without any adverse claim or ownership having been made by John Wiltbank or his heirs. The motive with which the present suit is brought, namely, to prevent the bell from being harmed by accompanying junketing councilmen to expositions once too often, is a most laudable one. But Philadelphia is jealous of its rights in the Liberty Bell and will resist this rather too ancient claim, regardless of the pious motives which inspire it.—Philadelphia Press.

AN OLD AND WELL TRIED REMEDY.  
MRS. WINLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP for children teething should always be used for children while teething. It softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty-five cents a bottle. It is the best.