

A Costly Poem.

For a poem received \$25,000 for his version of Homer. But the price was not a composition offered by the proprietor of a half-penny journal in England has just been paid \$5,000 for five lines of verse composed by "poem" which was adjudged the best offered. This is at the rate of \$1,000 a line, and say \$100 a word, making this the most costly poem on record.

On the Way to Paradise.

Let us hope that the people who habitually disregard their health will reach that desirable place, and avoid the locality which is less desirable as an eternal residence on account of the heat and surroundings generally. But with us tarry in this vale of tears, why should we voluntarily endure the tortures of dyspepsia when a systematic use of Hostetter's Stomach Bitters will rid us of the atrocious malady which—unless physicians are very much at fault—tends to shorten the term of our existence. Heartburn, biliousness, constipation, indigestion, and all the ailments which are symptomatic of it. These are all eliminated by the Bitters, which are a perfectly reliable, safe, and singular remedy over this formidable complaint. It has carried off so many of our brightest and best.

AGRICULTURAL TOPICS.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR RURAL READERS.

Importance of Stirring the Ground—Caring for Farm Labor—Value of Fats and Ashes for Pigs—The Dairy at the World's Fair—Household and Kitchen.

Keep the Ground Stirred.

EVERY farmer understands the value of a frequent stirring of the soil in the corn field. The value of this practice, however, is greatly increased in seasons of drought. The reasons are that the top of the soil is frequently dried up, and made to act as a sponge, and arrests the moisture that is being constantly poured into the air above.

Says an agricultural exchange: We once made the following experiment, to obtain an approximate idea of the amount of moisture thus drawn off, and the hindering effect on evaporation through constant stirring of the surface soil.

During a prolonged drought a place in a well traveled highway was selected, where the fine dust was several inches deep. A large bell glass (a two-quart Mason Jar) was placed in the place, and everything which it contained was wiped perfectly dry and placed mouth down on the dust and covered with several thicknesses of white cotton cloth.

After a period of five minutes the cloth was removed and it was found that sufficient moisture had arisen from the dust, and condensed on the cold glass, to run down its sides and form a wet ring in the dust, quite plainly discernible.

On the other side of the road was a field of corn which the owner had not cultivated for more than a week. The dry weather had formed a multitude of fine cracks in the soil, out of which moisture was passing at a rapid rate.

To determine the difference in evaporation of the uncultivated and the frequently stirred dust, in the road was a fact that would be valuable to know. Accordingly we again chilled the glass and placed it in the cornfield in the same manner as for a like period of time as in the road dust. The result showed to our satisfaction that the moisture was pouring out of the cornfield at least three times faster than in the road.

Had the owner of the cornfield kept the ground stirred lightly on top every two or three days he would have arrested this wasting moisture and thereby watered his corn very effectively, besides destroying the noxious weeds that grow up in the corn.

It was worth to us all the time and trouble we expended in our experiment to know this principle and learn how thereafter to turn it to valuable account in the cultivation of corn and other crops.

An Immovable Grindstone. Who has not been annoyed when grinding by the wobbling of the grindstone on its frame, especially when the treadle was in use? I have never found anything so simple and so effective as a arrangement shown in the cut, writes a correspondent in Farm and Garden.

The laborer has always resisted the introduction of labor-saving machines at the outset, sometimes to the destruction of the offending innovation, fearing that the demand for his service may decline and wages fall.

It is ever a futile opposition and a foolish fear, as the result is always an increase of demand and production, the elevation of labor and increase of wages. Fifty years ago the wages of farm hands employed by the farmer ranged from \$5 to \$10 per month, rarely \$12 in regions of unusual demand.

The range for labor is now from \$20 to \$30 per month, in extreme cases somewhat higher. Last year, in the midst of depression, the average wages of New England was \$26.64 per month of the Middle States, \$23.62, of the Western States, \$22.

It has been very steady for years. It was less in 1871, when all prices were very low. The labor of colored men has also advanced as it has become more intelligent. The farm labor of the Southern States averaged \$14.77 last year. It is a common complaint of farmers that labor is too high. As the burden of rural drudgery is relieved, the proprietor is inclined to take things easier, as he should do, if he can afford it, giving himself more time for reading, study, management, and social duties and privileges. And the laborer is also worthy of his hire.—American Agriculturist.

LIVE STOCK AND DAIRY. Salt Ashes for Pigs. Animals that are confined in close quarters and fed on concentrated food always require certain mineral elements which nature supplies to them in the fields and woods. The need which pigs have for salt and ashes is well known, but it is not so generally practiced and tried up to. When the pigs are roaming about the fields and woods they do not need the ashes, but when confined in their winter quarters they need a concentrated food a weekly supply of wood ashes will be of inestimable value to them. We have not yet found out exactly what element in the ashes they desire, whether it is the charcoal, lime or potash, but it is certain that the ashes themselves are very beneficial. One of the benefits of feeding them rations of meal and fodder. They eat more and staidier, and their food is

better digested and assimilated.

Experiments at the station with a great number of pigs have proven this fact beyond dispute. Salt does not act directly take the place of ashes, for where food, water and salt were given in abundance, and the ashes omitted, the pigs did not take on as healthy a growth. Where both were omitted the animals became sickly, and seemed to want something which the food and water could not supply.

Corn is a very rich food, and it goes to meat and muscle in a way that no other food does when fed to pigs, but its very richness often clogs the system and prevents the best results. The stomachs of the animals can not digest and assimilate it. The same is true of all the other highly concentrated foods. They generally clog the appetite and prevent the highest results. Ashes and salt come in as splendid articles to prevent such disastrous result. They act as tonics and medicine, clearing the system of effete matter, and giving strength and tone to all of the internal organs. It is probably in this way that ashes help the pigs. They set directly upon the digestive organs, but really add nothing to the body. If corn is making the pigs puffed up, and their appetite is poor, a liberal supply of salt and ashes should be given. Hard wood ashes of the best quality should be used for this purpose, as they seem to give the best results. The ashes and salt should be administered in equal quantities, either by sprinkling on the feed, or by a vessel in the pen for the pigs to take when they feel inclined.

The Dairy at the World's Fair. Rules for governing the production of dairy tests of breeds at the Columbian Dairy School have been submitted by the sub-committee of the Executive Committee of the Columbian Association. There will be two breed tests, one for the cow and one for the pig, of which it is to be devoted to the making; for other seven months, thirty days and six days and under the same committee as the other. Each cattle association competing shall furnish twenty-five registered cows of their breed, except the Anglo-Polled and Brown Swiss associations, which may compete with an entry of fifteen cows each. An accurate account will be kept of all food given their cows for thirty days before and during the test, and all kinds of dairy products so made in the test, and charged to the cow so fed at the market value. Owners will be at liberty to feed as they choose, provided ordinary foods are fed to the cattle. Great care will be taken to guard against adulteration of the milk. Cows will be closely watched as well, also their products, to see that they are exactly as stated. Awards will be made for increase of flesh, the amount of butter or cheese made by individual cows and for the best dairy and also herd of five cows.

THE POULTRY-YARD. Fertilization. A time and labor saving way to purify the poultry-house is practiced and praised by a writer in the Germantown Telegraph: I attach my spraying pump to a kerosene barrel, and pour water into every part of the house—cracks, corners, roof, all—and then sweep it, after which I fill the barrel full of lime-water and spray the inside of the house with it. I think it much better than the usual washing, and more easily done. The lime gets into the cracks, and reaches the inside of the house in good shape.

Wire Fences to Yards. The wire fence does not keep the winds out of the yards. When such a fence is made, the lower part should be of boards, and they should be put together so as to be close. A fence seven feet high, composed of three feet of boards and four feet of wire, should be high enough to keep nearly all breeds of hens within bounds, and the boards will make the yards much warmer and more comfortable when wire only is used. It is an advantage for the hens to be outside sometimes, for they will not be content to remain in on clear days; but to send them outside on a cold, windy day, with the yards enclosed only with wire, is to expose them to a very severe test.

A yard should have wind-breaks of some kind if the hens are to occupy them, and this can be accomplished in several ways; one by having boards attached to the bottom, and another by arranging corn stalks on the north and west sides of the fence. Anything that will break the force of the wind will be found beneficial.—Farm and Fireside.

Points on Poultry. TAME HENS, like other tame and gentle stock, have the advantage of enjoying all their food in the open. Frigid wastes food in the bird as in the cow, and also frequently causes broken eggs, broken windows in the henry, and other losses.

CORN is too fattening for fowls as a steady diet in mild weather, but for winter in cold weather it is better than a full crop of it heated slightly before it is fed.

APPLES decaying in the cellar, and there are plenty of them this winter, will be used economically by the poultry. Ducks and geese have been wintered on them almost all winter.

A MIST of dry grass, standing constantly in the fowl house, will do the birds good, both in the exercise they will get picking the fine stuff, and in making them drink more. It will not fatten them, while they will improve upon it.

The incubator has taken the place of the hen on many farms the past season, resulting in many cases in a larger percentage of healthy, vigorous chicks. It is the coming way of hatching.

HOUSEHOLD AND KITCHEN. Old-Fashioned Remedies. For sore and inflamed eyes use burnt alum. Place the alum on a hot iron till it stops bubbling; then dissolve it in cold water. It will smart but it will do good. For dysentery or diarrhea, a strong decoction of white oak bark is good. It is good, table-spoonful at a time. Two or three doses are usually sufficient. For erysipelas and salt rheum use the oil of tansy. One application cured erysipelas of twelve months' standing and salt rheum after the doctor had given it up. Ten or twelve drops of kerosene oil on sugar, taken on going to bed, will break up a severe cold. It is very heating.

Useful Knowledge. To CURE CHILBLAINS.—Bathe the feet in a strong solution of alum. To TAKE STRAINS OUT OF SILK.—Mix in a vital two ounces of essence of lemon and one ounce of oil of turpentine. Grease and other spots rubbed gently with a linen rag dipped in this wash will disappear.

MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS.

CRITICISM OF METHODS OF INSTRUCTION EMPLOYED.

Children Can Learn to Read Music as readily as They can to Read Words. Where One Is Taught in a Rational Manner as the Other.

Practical Suggestions. Many public schools are giving much attention to music. Reading, however, for a time, has been abandoned for the scientific method. And there are singing-superintendents and assistant superintendents, and charts and blackboard exercises, and graded singing-books, and a compliant force of general teachers, and yet the children are not learning to read music as readily as they are to read words.

These were refused, on the ground that the fellow could quite well work if he chose, and the Englishman resumed business, trying to disregard the mendicant, who, however, did not budge an inch, but remained silent with "what appeared to be a pair of tongs and a brass dish at the extremity" still extended to receive the expected coin.

I looked up at him again. There he stood on one leg, his eyes riveted on mine. He continued this performance for nearly an hour.

"If you stand there any longer," I said, at length, "I'll give you a taste of lightning as will soon make you glad to go."

The only answer to this threat was a smile of derision that sent his mustache bristling against his nose.

"Lightning can't touch a fakir; the gods take care of him."

Without more ado I charged the battery and connected it with a coil machine, which, as those who have tried it are in the position of making nerves in a way that few persons are capable of voluntarily enduring beyond a few seconds.

The fakir seemed rather amused at the queer-looking implements on the table, but otherwise maintained a look of lofty stolidity, nor did he seem in any way alarmed when I approached with the conductors.

I fastened one wire to his still extended tongs, and the other to the foot on the ground. The machine was not set in action, and beyond concerning him a little, the attachment of the wires produced no effect, but when I pushed the magnet into the coil, and gave him the full strength of the battery, he howled like a demon.

The tongs, to which his hand was now fastened by a force against his will, quivered in his grasp. He threw himself on the ground, yelling and gnashing his teeth, the tongs clanging an irregular accompaniment. He rolled about in such a way as to get his feet in every position conceivable, and he would do himself mischief. I stopped the machine, therefore, and he scrambled up, and held the lawn at a double-quick step.—N. Y. Journal.

Naval's Delightful Climate. In May, June and July the weather on the Neva is as hot as it is in summer time in Queensland, and the chief delights of the people whose official duties detain them in the capital is to be rowed about the Neva in the boat, and to go to the pier to experience the pleasurable sensation of being able to read the newspaper without the aid of artificial light at 12 p. m.

The Barbarous Esquimaux. Both sexes among the Esquimaux are tattooed. Labrets are favorite ornaments. In early youth a cut is made in the lower lip and a small wooden ring is introduced to keep it open. Generally the lip is enlarged and the adult is decorated with a labret of jade, ivory, bone or glass, shaped like a silk hat in miniature, the rim being inside the mouth to hold it.

The Poshy Thing. A dime fell down behind one of the bolts in the big safety vaults of the City National Bank of Plainfield, N. J., the other night, when it was locked, and the vault could not be opened. It was not until the next morning that the vault was opened, and had to cut a big hole in one of them.

He Was Frightful. A man who had a lot of bread of a Lewiston baker, says the Journal, and finding he could not eat it all he brought back part of it the second day and asked to have it exchanged for hot biscuits. "If that don't beat the bread of a baker," said the miller, "remarked that the baker was a fool." The baker wasn't so soft enough to exchange.

Mail Matter. A citizen of Chicago has invented a simple device for delivering mail matter to the upper floors of buildings by means of movable boxes attached to wires on the exterior. The effect is to save an endless amount of stair climbing—a matter which steadily increases in importance as buildings grow in height.

The Bamboo Tree. The bamboo tree does not blossom until it reaches its thirtieth year, when it produces seed profusely, and then dies. It is said that a famine was prevented in India in 1812 by the sudden flowering of the bamboo trees, fifty thousand people resorting to the jungles to gather the seed for food.

Deep Buried Belles. A Stockton mail-borer recently found the tooth of an animal at a depth of 1,124 feet. It resembles the tooth of a monkey. Another tooth, apparently that of a herbaceous animal, was found at a depth of 900 feet.

A Buttery Bath. An Australian butterfly, the one will alight close to the water, into which it backs until the whole of the body is submerged, the fore legs alone retaining their hold on dry land. In a moment it will fly away, apparently refreshed.

In Past Ages. A copper rod projecting from the face of a cliff in Saline County, Mo., is said to be of great date. In the far West, beyond the ken of man, copper mining was carried on in that vicinity.

A Rhode Island Quarry. On a farm in the suburbs of Providence, R. I., there has been located what is claimed to be one of the largest and richest veins of granite in the entire country.

The City of Melbourne. Melbourne, Australia, which was founded less than fifty years ago, has now a population of 500,000, and is the fifth city in size in the British Empire.

BECAUSE the New York Republicans are depending on a Fessett is no sign that the Democrats will depend upon a bungle.—Washington Star.

art. Let "the wee to" be placed wisely,

persistently at the head of St. George's train and future years may have for us the revelation of general musical power.

PLAYING WITH LIGHTNING.

Why a Fakir Rolled on the Ground and Tossed a Liba a Distance. The unfortunate fakir must have been firmly impressed with the superiority of English magic to his own, although these strange men are often adepts in mystery, and perfect masters of tricks of all kinds. The amateur experimenter had arranged his apparatus in the open air, and was setting to work when the fakir made his appearance and asked for alms.

These were refused, on the ground that the fellow could quite well work if he chose, and the Englishman resumed business, trying to disregard the mendicant, who, however, did not budge an inch, but remained silent with "what appeared to be a pair of tongs and a brass dish at the extremity" still extended to receive the expected coin.

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DIRECTIONS FOR TYING THE TIE.

An Exact Description of a Method Requiring Care and Patience Only. Will you kindly illustrate by diagrams in your Sunday edition how a white lawn tie for evening dress should be tied? Ten thousand of your readers have occasion to wear evening dress and do not know how to adjust the tie, a young man wrote to the Sun. This request is simple, and it is to be hoped that the young man has overestimated the number of men who are unable to adjust their lawn ties.

The well-dressed man never wears a made-up tie, an expert says. He ties his own four-in-hand and his Ascot. The ready-made lawn tie for evening dress is stiff, cannot be made to fit snugly to the collar, and its only recommendation is that it saves

the time required to tie a knot. Any man who can tie a bow-knot can tie a lawn tie. On each man's skill and patience, however, depends the success of his tie. The knot is made carelessly and the lawn twisted and wrinkled the tie is a failure. One reason why some men fail to make the proper knot is that they do not take time enough. The lawn must be handled carefully, and after the knot has been made it will not be mistaken for the ready-made article.

Here is one method of making the knot. The ends of the tie should be of the same length. They should be crossed at the top, as in Fig. 1, and make a simple knot, as in Fig. 2. Twist these ends around so that they will be in the position outlined by the dots in Fig. 3. If the first knot be not drawn tight the tie will be a failure, and it will annoy the wearer by climbing up the front of the collar. Then make a loop of the lower end of the tie through the upper end, as shown in Fig. 4. The end outside of the bow should be bent as the other one was and drawn up inside of it. That makes a double bow-knot, as shown in Fig. 4. Before the bows are drawn tight they will be in the position outlined by the dots in Fig. 5. That gives the tie a finished appearance. To keep the knot tight a very small pearl pin, or a silver pin with a small round head can be run through the back of the knot so that only a glimpse of the head of the pin can be obtained from the side. Small pins were worn last winter, although

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