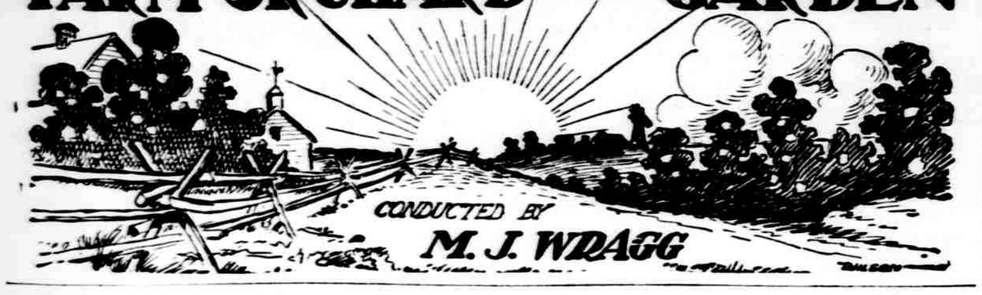
FARM ORCHARD AND GARDEN



[Mr. Wragg invites contributions of any new ideas that readers of this department may wish to present, and would be pleased to answer correspondents desiring information on subjects discussed. Address M. J. Wragg, Waukee or Des Moines, Iowa.]

PLAN FOR THE WINTER'S RATION.

It is time that every dairyman should carefully consider what he is going to feed his cows during the coming winter. Those who have an abundance of clover hay have much to be thankful for, as this contains a large proportion of protein, so essential in milk production. He that can give his cows all the good hay they will consume need give no thought to the high price of commercial foods.

One of the very best grain rations to go with clover hay is a combination of half and half ground oats and barley, oats and corn or oats and wheat. If there is not clover, wild hay, timothy or corn fodder must take its place. As these are all deficient in small amount of linseed meal or some other highly nitrogenous food to balance up the ration, or if there is an abundance of oats at hand they may be made the principal of the grain ration, as they are very rich in protein. Either good wild hay, timothy or corn fodder, or a combination of two of these or of all three with a grain ration made up almost exclusively of ground oats makes as cheap and almost satisfactory a ration as can be compounded by science. If the good milkers are given all of this roughage they will consume, and about one pound of ground grain to each cwt. of the animal fed, and divided into two feeds, there is no doubt that the results will be satisfactory, providing the cows are inclined to give milk, are comfortably housed, regularly fed and receive kind treatment. We would, of course, prefer some sort of succulence, as roots, or to have the corn fodder in the shape of silage.

While we have come to believe that the silo is the best and the cheapest means of handling corn fodder, we do not claim that silage is indispensable in obtaining good results, as we have ourselves made quite ordinary cows bring a revenue of $50 per year without either roots or silage.

Persons who want to know or understand life in all its features must not confine their observations to city life alone. They must go forth into the country and see home life on the farm. The fondness fo. rural life has had a great salutary effect upon our national character. Some of our nation's best representatives have come from homes on the farm.

SELECTION OF SEED POTATOES.

Potatoes to be used for seed ought to be selected the previous fall. Only medium-sized tubers should be used. The practice of selecting small potatoes of unmarketable size for seed is contrary to the principles of plant breeding. Growers should select seed which is typical of the potatoes they wish to produce. Neither the largest nor smallest are best, but those of uniform size.

These potatoes during the winter should be kept in a cool cellar, where they will be subject neither to frost nor to heat from the furnace. If a cellar furnishing the proper conditions cannot be secured, then the potatoes should be banked in the fall and covered securely with straw and earth to keep them from freezing.

It is often thought that in order to get good seed potatoes it is necessary to purchase from Maine each year, or from some point farther north. This practice, while occasionally advisable, is not necessary each year. If we select our best tubers for seed and keep them as they should be kept, they will be as good seed potatoes as can be secured anywhere.

In cutting the seed tubers each piece cut should be of good size, and should contain one bud or more. The number of buds which is contained in each piece of potato is not so important as it is that each piece be of good size. The cutting should receive the personal supervision of the farmer, and not be intrusted to hired help, unless it is most reliable.

If the potatoes are cut into long, thin strips, a large surface is exposed from which evaporation takes place. Where the planting is followed by dry weather as it was last spring, the piece of potato may dry out so that the bud will never commence growth.

The question is frequently discussed as to whether corn should be shredded or put into the silo. Public sentiment is swerving more and more in the direction of siloing the corn, and in this conclusion it is correct. Shredding is a vast improvement over feeding in the old way, but one of the chief difficulties connected with the shredding of corn is found in the fact that when the season comes for shredding corn, the weather is frequently of such a character as to make it impossible to engage in this work.

STORING CABBAGE.

The storing of cabbage is an important item. If one does not possess the proper cellars it is best to bury in the open ground, putting the heads down on a level bit of ground, covering with straw and with earth enough to prevent freezing and thawing. Dig trenches along the line of cabbages to drain off the water. In storing cabbage in a cellar the temperature must be kept low or the heads will become flabby and tough.

FALL PLANTING.

There is doubtless a question in the minds of many about planting in the fall or waiting until spring. It may be that there are only a few trees grape vines or berry bushes to be planted, but to those who need these few things it is a matter of importance.

The decision as to whether or not to buy and plant in the fall largely depends on where it is to be done. In the prairie States north of Texas, I would say not to do it, but over a large portion of the country, especially east of Ohio and Kentucky, I would say to plant at that time. The objection to fall planting in the central part of the country is the damage that comes from the drying out of the tops and roots during following winter, before they have become firmly fixed in the ground. The sudden changes of temperature and especially the long and windy cold spells are very trying to newly planted trees. It is not so bad on berry bushes or anything that does not have much exposed surface above ground. Where the climate is moist and they are planted early enough to form rootlets before cold weather, there is likely to be ability to safely endure it; but when there are not roots with tender, absorbent parts, and in moist soil, to take up water to replenish that which is carried off through the tops there is sure to be injury done.

In many cases it is a decided advantage to plant in the fall. In nearly all parts of the East and South and on the Pacific Slope, this is true. Nor should the ordering be put off until late. The earlier the nurserymen have the orders the sooner they can prepare to fill them, and the sooner they can be delivered. The cost is usually a little less in fall than in spring, and sometimes the stock is of a better grade.

One thing that can be done almost anywhere is to buy nursery stock in the autumn and heel-in or bury until spring. Then it can be taken up and planted in good season, and often before it is possible to get it from the nurseries at that time of year. But the heeling-in must be well done. The soil should be sifted and trampled well between the roots after opening all large bundles, and the earth piled up to their tops. In the prairie region I used to literally bury all stock that I got in the fall and it paid me to do it.

A study of prices on farm products for 40 years reveals the fact that while all other staple agricultural products have cheapened, the average price of marketable apples has increased and first class apples put on the market now bring a higher price than in any previous decade.

A PLEASING PLENTITUDE.

If half a feller's dreams of fame,
Contentment, riches, honored name,
Were realized, he'd have, you see,
No time at all for misery.
His face would wear no worried frowns,
He'd never know the ups and downs,
The ins and outs that make folks blue—
If half a feller's dreams came true.

He'd want no more than half, I'm sure,
To warrant him he'd ne'er be poor
In worldly goods, to guarantee
His heart would e'er be light and free;
To prove, forsooth, beyond a doubt,
He'd win in all he went about,
O'ertake each thing he deigned pursue—
If half a feller's dreams came true.

As towering peak, as arching sky,
A feller builds his dreams as high;
As mighty continents and seas,
A feller's dreams are broad as these!
And so it's easy, quite, to see
Such opulent immensity
Would well suffice, though cut in two,
And only half our dreams came true.
—Exchange.

Fall pruning of the vine is much more prevalent than formerly, and is fast growing in favor. The prejudice that February only was the proper time to prune vines is fast passing away. Although the vine has yielded its fruit and lost its foliage, the sap is still at work performing its functions in maturing and ripening the wood. This being the case it is fair to presume that the less it has to do, i. e., the less wood it has to ripen, the more perfectly it will do its work; hence the removal of all wood not needed for next pear's fruiting is so much relief to the vine. The wood it to be used for propagating purposes is all the better for not being hardened sufficiently to stand exposure during winter. The weather this month is milder and more favorable for pruning and more comfortable for the operator than mid-winter. The snow, and often intense cold, render winter pruning anything but an agreeable job.

More farmers get their fingers burned on a steel range bought of peddlers than anything else, for they can usually purchase the same range for $10 less from their home merchant.

HORTICULTURAL OBSERVATIONS.

A man can soon run out a variety of strawberries that have fruited heavily. A variety that has been exhausted can be restored to its first vigor by gathering vigorous plants that have formed in new ground from the old plants. At a recent convention a professor said that even the Wilson strawberry can be resorted to its former vigor by, say ten years of careful selection. Asked how he would go about it, he replied his course would be to select the most thrifty Wilson plants at fruiting time and have new plants formed by runners from these. His process continued would result in giving a plant of great vigor and productiveness.

Just now "the frost is on the pumpkin and the fodder's in the shock."

INSTITUTE NOTES.

The farmer's institute is not complete without the farmer's wife and daughter. They take more interest in the discussions than the good man imagines. They are entirely competent to take part and should be invited and urged to do so.

The institutes that do not have night sessions make a mistake. The townspeople should always be invited to these and the addresses should be of a character to interest both town and country. Townspeople are more interested in farm matters than farmers sometimes imagine, and every night session of an institute would do much to awaken interest in the day discussions and promote good feeling between the town and country.

The institutes are teaching farmers how well they can talk on farm questions. We have seen many a farmer, when called upon to speak on some topic on which he was known to have experience declare positively that he could not do so. When at last he was good naturedly forced to give his views, he surprised both himself and his neighbors by the fluency and fitness of his remarks.

The institues are showing farmers how they may co-operate in many ways; for example, in mutual insurance, in co-operative buying and selling, in the establishment of horse companies, creameries, canning factories and other enterprises which fail without active co-operation. They are fast molding the different elements in a community in to a harmonious whole embuing them with a common life, showing them how nearly they are brethern in fact as well as in name. Americanizing the foreigner and teaching the native American the sterling virtues which a large per cent of our foreign population have. Out of this harmonious blending will arise one of the finest examples of independent, self-reliant, intelligent farm life that any country has ever seen.

Mr. Miller of Nebraska writes: "I enclose you some leaves from what I bought for Vincennes grape. Can you tell me what it is? I also bought such things as Paeonies, and I find by good authority that the nurseryman who furnished the stock has sent me Yucca. I bought Althea and Hydrangea, and they furnished Lilacs. I spent $50 and have but little that I bought, and nothing true to name."

In reply to Mr. Miller will say that it is only another instance of misplaced confidence. It was his duty before placing an order of this size with an agent to know positively if the company that he represented existed, and that he was going to get fair treatment. It is no worse than the patent-right swindler, the clothvender, the Bohemian oats graft and dozens of other swindles that are all the time being perpetrated. We think it is a fair rule to adopt to only deal with firms at home, or those that advertise in reputable farm papers, who have a standing not only at home but abroad.

The leaves received in the letter are not from grapes at all, but are currant leaves, showing conclusively that currant bushes had been substituted for grape vines.

NOTES ON THE TULIP TREE.

This beautiful large tree is a member of the magnolia family. In some sections it is known as yellow poplar or whitewood tree and in others as the tulip tree. The large tulip-shaped, tragrant flowers appearing in June readily suggest this latter name. The leaves are large, fresh looking and most singularly lobed, their peculiar form having given rise to a local name in some places of the "fiddle tree." Their fall coloring is a pleasing yellow. It is in the winter season that its handsome, evenly tapered trunk, especially in young specimens, can be admired.

When established, its growth is rapid, and in time it becomes a very large tree. It is not easily transplanted unless quite young, and then its removal should only be attempted in the spring, says Gardening.

We are pleased to announce that we have found the tulip tree reasonably hardy in central Iowa, and know of many specimens 25 to 30 feet high standing in Madison, Polk and adjoining counties. They were brought here by the early settlers, who came from Indiana, and brought them directly from the forest.

The census of 1900 credits Missouri with 20,000,000 apple trees, one-third more than any other state. Millions have been planted since, but the apple production is not keeping pace with population. During the last ten years the population has increased 21 per cent apple production only 15 per cent.

LATE FALL PASTURE FOR SHEEP.

It is advisable to keep some fresh pasturage for late fall feeding. Exercise in the fall is conducive to thrift in winter and healthy lambs in the spring. In the northern climate sheep are housed too much at best. The ewes may obtain more food than would be supposed from a field of fresh blue grass pasture that has been in part retained for them.

There is work in every season on the farm. If the farmer would have a holiday, he should plan for it in the same way as does the busy merchant. If he waits until his work is done he will never leave the farm.

THANKSGIVING SENTIMENTS

"If thou are blest
Then let the sunshine of thy gladness rest
On the dark edges of each cloud that lies
Black in thy brother's skies.
If thou art sad,
Still be thou in thy brother's gladness glad."

• • •

"Let thy alms go before thee and keep heaven's gate open for thee, or both may come too late."

• • •

A toast to Thanksgiving,
A pæan of pruise—
A health to our forefathers brave;
May we honor the deeds
They have done in the past,
Hold sacred all that they gave."
—Selected by Laura E. Smith in "What to Eat."

Although days of thanksgiving, especially for the fruits of the earth, have been customary in all ages of the world and in connection with every form of religion, Thanksgiving day as an annual harvest home and family reunion under Christian auspices is a purely American institution and, outside of New England, is of comparatively recent origin.

As a national holiday it began in the head and heart of Abraham Lincoln, who proclaimed Nov. 26, 1863, as a thanksgiving day for the simultaneous victories of Gettysburg and Vicksburg on July 4 and for the abundant harvests of that year, and Nov. 24, 1864, as a thanksgiving day for similar blessings.

There had been other days set apart for thanksgiving during the war, but these were the first of the unbroken series in the month of November. President Johnson continued the custom out of respect for Mr. Lincoln, and it has been instinctively recognized by every president since. In several states the governors also make coincident proclamations.

Though at present mostly a hallowed memory, Thanksgiving day, when it was in its prime, was one of the noblest and most delightful things in American civilization. Time was when on this day all the churches were thronged with cheerful and devout worshipers, and the ministers, speaking from bowers of corntops and sheaves of wheat and pyramids of pumpkins and red apples, moved every heart by their tribute to the divine goodness.

From the religious temples the people turned to the family altars, where the fires of filial devotion burned just as briskly. The members of the household assembled, some of them from remote localities, to look into the changed countenances of "the old people" perhaps for the last time, sat down to a royal feast of good things, the greatest feast of all being the revived and overflowing family affections and the inextinguishable attachment to the family hearthstone. That was American civilization in its flower and fruitage.

As long as our people are a home-loving people, as long as filial and fraternal love are aflame and as long as we will cross mountains and traverse continents to gather once more at the old family homestead, to drop a tear for the departed and to receive the embrace of those who survive, our institutions are safe.

Those who have reached middle life can not but regret the partial decadence of Thanksgiving day within their own recollection. In our day it is little more than a secular holiday devoted to athletic sports. The secular holiday and the athletic sports are, of course, good things in themselves, but it is not pleasant to see them take the place of an admirable and invaluable social custom.

There is every year by custom and by proclamation of president and governors a day of Thanksgiving. Upon this day the American nation offers to the throne of Divine Grace its prayerful thanks and sings peans of praise for the many bounties and blessings that have been bestowed upon our people. True, in this great world there may be some who are unable to look back and point with pride and thankfulness to many acts and things connected with their lives, but goodness always exceeds the bad and the world is constantly growing better and brighter. Opportunities are increasing and men are not slow to take advantage of them.

The prayers of praise for the benefits of the past and the prayers of supplications for other blessings to follow will be heeded by the Deity and his constant care extended toward us. No cataclysm of crime can eradicate from man the belief that he is the creature of a supernatural power and intelligence. The tendency of scientific research is to strengthen this belief by making more manifest the wondrous works of God. It may be considered doubtful if the belief in man's divine origin was ever entirely obliterated from any human mind. With this belief firmly planted in the hearts and homes of this great American nation and mindful of the true source of all earthly power and blessings, it is fitting that in the temples erected by our people in which to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, that they should meet together on this day and give praise to Him who watches over us.

The Thanksgiving Oocoocoo.

The original name of the turkey was Oocoocoo, by which it was known by the native Cherokee Indians. It is supposed that our Pilgrim Fathers, roaming through the woods in search of game for their first Thanksgiving spread heard the Oocoocoo calling in the familiar tones of our domesticated fowl, "Turk, turk, turk." These first Yankee huntsmen, mistaking this cry of the bird for its real song, immediately labelled it "turkey," and turkey it is to this day. Much more beautiful and musical was the Indian name, "Oo-coo-coo," the notes peculiar to the flock when sunning themselves in perfect content on the river beaches.—Sunset Magazine.

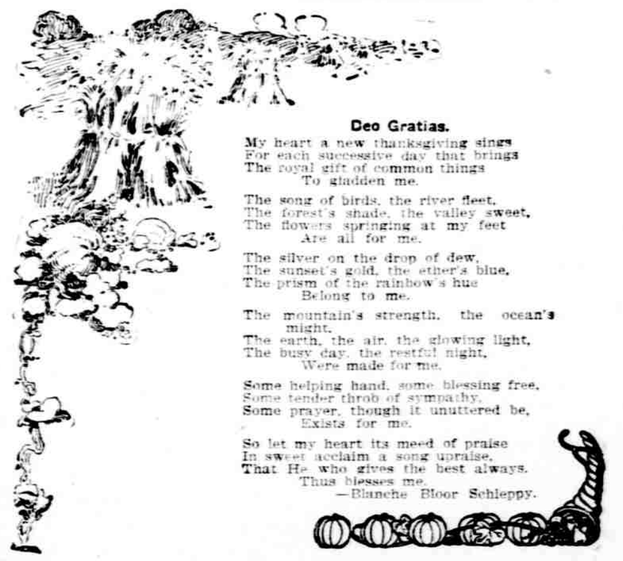
Primitive Pilgrim Feasts.

It is supposed that our Pilgrim parents were whetting their appetites upon wild turkey at the very moment when the news of their possible ultimate starvation reached England. It must have been terrible indeed on the approach of winter, with few and imperfect firearms at command, for these desperate Puritans to knock live gobbling turkeys off the trees and make a meal of them! No spiced stuffing with chestnuts and oysters for them! Just simple turkey, roasted upon hot stones or boiled in a cauldron instead of being smothered in a lidded receptacle basted every fifteen minutes in its own juices.

A Tough Proposition.

The ostrich to the this said,
Out on Sahara's waste:
"I'm glad I'm not a turkey cock,

Loved only for my taste.
I give my pretty feathers up
At Fashion's stern behest;
But as Thanksgiving meal I fear
I hardly would digest!"



Deo Gratias.

My heart a new thanksgiving sings
For each successive day that brings
The royal gift of common things
To gladden me.

The song of birds, the river fleet,
The forest's shade, the valley sweet,
The flowers springing at my feet
Are all for me.

The silver on the drop of dew,
The sunset's gold, the ether's blue,
The prism of the rainbow's hue
Belong to me.

The mountain's strength, the ocean's might,
The earth, the air, the glowing light,
The busy day, the restful night,
Were made for me.

Some helping hand, some blessing free,
Some tender throb of sympathy,
Some prayer, though it unuttered be,
Exists for me.

So let my heart its meed of praise
In sweet acclaim a song upraise,
That He who gives the best always,
Thus blesses me.
—Blanche Bloor Schleppy.