

Spring Work in the Garden.

BY HORTUS.

Warm, sunny days should be busy ones this month. Pruning should be actively pushed forward. All old and superfluous branches removed; scrape the old, rough bark off the trees, and give orchard grounds a good manuring. There is no good to be derived from the practice of mulching or piling up of heaps of manure around the butts of old trees, as we often see. Scatter it well over the soil, evenly, and the young feeding roots will get the benefit. Lime and salt may also be applied in liberal quantities. How much?—a question often asked, can be determined always by the size of the orchard; and amount of cost for a certain quantity will always decide the quantity to be applied. One thing certain, you need not be afraid of applying too much, and the more you apply, the greater the return of health and fruitfulness to your trees. Half the blights and diseases in trees are caused from starvation of the soil, and we have seen orchards, apparently dying, entirely renewed by a generous manuring. This is the proper time to prune grapes; cut away as much old wood as you can, leaving the young canes, and these should be shortened back about half their growth. Trim your currant bushes and raspberry canes, and manure all you can, as it is easier to cart manure when the ground is frozen, than waiting to be thawed out. Ashes, either wood or coal, should be spread over the ground, and on the paths. Plans may be formed now or any contemplated changes in the garden decided on. Make out your lists of seeds, and order your trees early, so as to receive first selection. What shall I plant? is a query often puzzling to decide when there are so many tempting and over-praised varieties of fruit described in catalogues. In brief we mention for profit in *Apples* to plant, Baldwin, Golden Russet, Northern Spy, R. I. Greening. *Pears*—Bartlett, Sheldon, Clapp's Favorite, Lawrence. *Plums*—Lombard, Yellow Eggs, Pond's Seedling, Imperial Gage, Washington. *Cherries*—Eaton, Black Eagle, May Duke, Ely, Richmond. *Currants*—Black Naples (true), White Grape, Cherry and Red Victoria. *Gooseberries*—Downing, Smith Seedling, Whitesmith, Houghton. *Grapes*—Brighton, Concord, Delaware, Salem. *Asparagus*—Conover's Colossal. *Rhubarb*—Myatt's Linnaeus. The foregoing list are old time and tested fruits, and can be relied on. Avoid ordering new, fancy varieties, no matter how well recommended. The country is annually cursed with a lot of novelties sent out with one object, only to make money out of. Farmers living in good fruit sections, should not purchase what's termed "Iron-clads," when they can grow good fruit, winter kinds and long keeping; why buy varieties that may be hardy enough, but will only keep a few weeks, as nearly all hardy fruits are early and of no value for keeping.

Value of Fruit Trees.

It is not generally known that our most common fruit trees are of great value for timber. Apple wood is in great request by the dealers in fancy lumber, and pear wood is still more desired. The latter is in great demand for carving and fancy ebony work, as it takes a deep, black stain very freely and works up in the lathe or under the carving tools very smoothly and without grain marks. So that a plantation of these trees might be profitably made for other purposes than the fruit, and many an old and very infirm orchard, whose bloom of youth long since departed, might far better be piled up in the lumber yard than to remain to cumber the ground, where a younger and more beautiful plantation might stand. Cherry is another valuable tree that is easily grown, and is saleable as timber for ornamental and cabinet work.

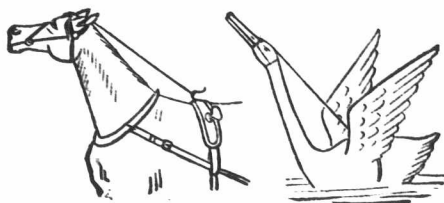
Potatoes in Hot Beds.

Potatoes may be started in hot beds so as to be ready to transplant to the field six inches high as soon as the weather will permit. In bedding them split them into two pieces lengthwise and bed them with the cut side down. The heat of the bed will soon cause them to sprout and grow, and when you are ready to transplant them the pieces may be taken up and the sprouts broken off and transplanted. If preferred the pieces may be cut with one sprout to a piece and thus transplanted. By this method you can mature the tubers two or three weeks earlier, and a bushel so sprouted will plant twice as large an area of land as by the old method of planting.

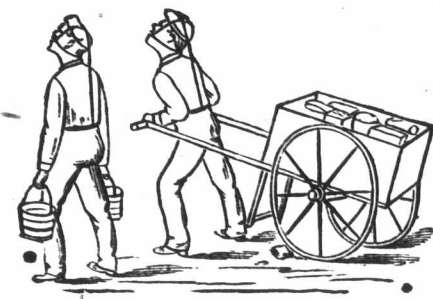
Stock.

The Over-Check Rein.

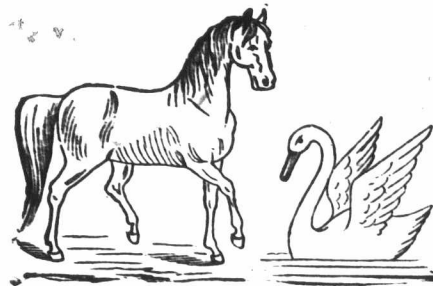
We are indebted to the Massachusetts Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for the following cuts:—The Society declares that this check rein is a foolish contrivance to torture, which has not one excuse, fastening the horse's head in a position unnatural and extremely painful, which exposes his eyes to the glare of the sun and prevents him seeing stones and other obstacles in the roadway.



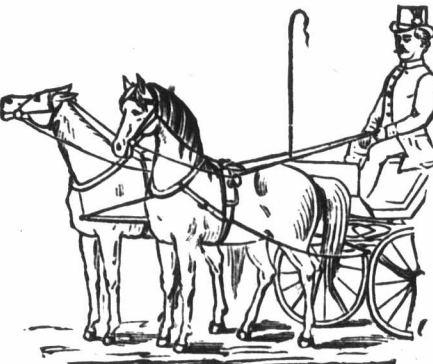
Unnatural Position—The Injury and Disfigurement of the Horse which results from the present "style" of the Over-check.



Let Them Know how it is Themselves—The Drivers of our Horses doing duty and putting on "style," with Head pulled back and Face turned upward by the Over-check.



Natural Position—The Grace and Beauty which comes from Arching Neck and Curving Lines.



Natural and Unnatural Position—Two Horses, One Beautiful from Head held in Graceful Position, the other Disfigured from its Head drawn in a Position which inflicts Pain and Torture.

Amber Cane for Stock.

Amber cane makes a most excellent fodder for cattle and horses when green, and also when cured, if not suffered to grow too large. The only objection to cane as a cured fodder is the sharp, tough rind of the stalk. It, like corn fodder, is difficult to cure well. Containing a large amount of sap and sugar, it sours if not put up in moderate sized shocks. Cattle are very fond of it on account of its sweet juice. In the fall they will eat the whole stalks clean. We have seen them begin at the butt end and eat all to the last panicle of seed, without dropping any part of it. Horses are also fond of

it, as they always are of sweet food, but it should be fed sparingly to them, for the stomach of the horse cannot digest so large an amount of tough fibre as cattle eat. We have fed the cured stalks to horses after running them through a cutter, and cutting only three sixteenths of an inch in length, breaking the tough, sharp rind into shreds, and reducing all nearly to a pulp. In this condition horses take no harm from eating amber cane, and we have acquaintances who say they have fed the stalks in winter to horses without injury, and they seem to prefer the cane stalks to hay.

It should be planted at the same time as corn, and the soil should be pretty clean. It grows very slowly at first, until it gets rooted, and then rapidly. It requires cultivating to insure a good crop. If to be used simply as fodder, it should be cut when the seed heads begin to form; but if for seed also, cut when the seed is in the dough state, and put up in moderate-sized shocks to cure in the field.

Amber seed is good food for horses, especially when ground. The rind of the seed is somewhat hard, and should be fed moderately if unground. But when well ground it has a value per 100 pounds about equal to corn. Dr. Collier, Chemist to the Department of Agriculture, analyzed these seeds and found them to contain—albuminoids, 9.98; fat, 4.60; carbo-hydrates, 71.56 per cent; comparing very well with corn. He figured the value the same.

Where this cane is raised for making sugar and syrup, it is very common to feed the seed heads to stock, and thresh the seed and grind for horse or cattle food. It is excellent when ground for fattening hogs. Three to five tons of cured fodder, and 25 to 40 bushels of seed, may be raised per acre.—[National Live-Stock Journal.]

Selecting Breeding Horses.

Our readers have not failed to see that we have an enduring faith in good, useful horse stock. Under the term "useful," we, of course, include good horses for every use, whether this be to hitch to a three-ton truck-load or to a hundred-pound road wagon. There is no better time for the farmer to plan for spring than during the leisure hours of winter. If it is desirable to change breeding-stock, with a view to improvement, there is no better time to do this than during the period between now and the season for coupling. Settle down upon the description of horse you think it wise to breed, as you are situated, and cast about for a foundation, if you have not already got it on your farm. The enterprise, too, among the stallion owners has never been more active than now, and the range for selection will be ample. Through the experience acquired in past years, while the opportunities have not been so good as could be desired, nor the foundation such as was approved, lessons have been learned that should be equal to any emergency. Farmers have too often deceived themselves by adhering to a horse because he was good at farm work, not looking far enough ahead to see that if sold for hard street service, his legs, or hoofs, or perhaps both, would fail him. The dealer is not slow to see these tendencies, and either discounts heavily, or rejects altogether. The foot and leg of the horse are a study mastered but by few; yet, every man who breeds from a single pair of mares should learn, partly by reading, but mainly by observation, the peculiarities of hoof and limb that will carry a horse, on hard pavements, at least one-half of his working life, without his becoming a confirmed cripple.

"Wildest enthusiasts," *The National Live-Stock Journal* remarks, make "extravagant claims" for the silo system.

There are about 600 creameries in the State of Iowa, and the yield of butter is estimated at 100,000,000 pounds per annum, which, at twenty-five cents per pound, amounts to \$25,000,000. The cheese product is valued at \$2,000,000, making a total of \$27,000,000 from that branch of industry alone. Iowa has one-thirtieth of all the milch cows in the United States.

Col. John D. Gillette, of Logan County, Ill., has wisely come to the conclusion that he will no more fatten the extremely heavy bullocks, for which his feed lots have been famed for years past. He declares that 25 per cent. more can be made on younger beeves. Big beeves are wanted, but not as a regular thing, as of yore. Early maturity is now the watchword of every progressive breeder.