

Notes of the Garden and Farm.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

BUSH FIRES.

It is time something was done to prevent those fires that are from year to year sweeping over the country, and destroying an immense amount of property. The forests are fast disappearing before the axe of the lumberer, and timber, that a few years ago was thought to be the greatest obstacle to the colonization of the country, will soon, in all likelihood, be a scarce and costly article. But, as if the cutting down the woods and clearing the land were doing the work too slowly, the fire, lighted by the carelessness of some one, consumes whole forests in its destructive march. A little spark in the beginning, if discovered in some dry branches, or rails, or trees, might easily be extinguished at once, but when once started the terrific fire sweeps on with the rapidity of lightning, till the whole trail of country is one vast wilderness. We are now again told of woods on fire—crops, fences and houses consumed. The forests of a hundred years growth, the property of farmers accumulated by years of hard toil, all feeding the devouring element, while by day and night strong men are fighting against it with all the energy of despair.

This is no slight matter. It is of the highest importance to the country at large, and as such it should engage the most serious attention of the Government and Legislature. Affairs of far less importance occupy them while measures for the preservation of the most valuable property of individuals and the nation are not thought of. If our rulers cannot devise some means for checking the repeated recurrences of the calamity, then let them take a lesson from other countries. We would direct their attention to the care of forest in Germany as one instance of what might be done here. The forest administration there is well known for its efficiency. There is a well-organized body of officers, to whom the care of the forests is allotted in assigned districts. They are presided over by a forest director, and as their responsibilities are great they receive fair remuneration for their services. Such a body of foresters in Canada would be a great means of preserving the forests; and, though they would be an additional expense to the country, it would be a mere bagatelle compared to the property they would be the means of saving from destruction. This is a question of importance to all, and to none more so than the farmers. Their property, their homes, their crops and stock are in the first to be destroyed, and the very lives of their families are in peril.

FARM LABORERS FOR CANADA.

"Five hundred laborers belonging to the English Agricultural Union left Liverpool for Canada the last week in August. This is one of the results of the farmers' lock-out." The sending laborers out to Canada too late in the season is a very injudicious measure. They cannot from the time of their arrival make the necessary provision for winter when there is little employment. Emigrants should come early in the season, that they may have half the year's employment, and so have the means requisite for their comfort and subsistence during the months when heavy expenses are unavoidable, and there is less opportunity for earning. Connected with this subject of emigration, another important question arises.—May the farmer expect a fair remuneration for the wages paid to hired laborers? There are differences of opinion on this subject. We know that with additional labor there will be greater produce, but is it true as urged by some, that the additional produce will not more than pay for the labor that produces it, if it will even pay that? W. J. F., a writer in the *Country Gentleman*, puts the case very strongly in favor of hired help on the farm. He says, "If farmers have one or two hundred acres left unproductive, while the farmer spends all his manure on a few acres, the farm, as a whole, may not pay expenses. The remedy is plain—employ more labor and thus make a larger capital productive." On almost any hundred acre farm two hands besides the farmer are absolutely needed, and can be paid easier than one. Two men on fifty acres of arable land will produce more than one man on one hundred acres, and three men on fifty

acres will equal two on a hundred." Our own opinion coincides pretty much with that of W. J. F. Labor, if judiciously expended on a farm, is a profitable investment. Our soil is capable of producing a much greater increase than it does, and for all the farm raises there are convenient markets and remunerative prices, and for meat and wool there is a fair prospect of higher prices in the future. But heavier crops, and better beef and mutton are only to be had by bestowing better labor on the soil. I have known 3,000 days work to be expended annually on a farm of 240 acres in the old country, and the farmer to live well and save money from the profits. With all the due allowance for the different rate of wages on one hand, and of rent and taxes on the other, and adding that the farmer himself did no labor, I must come to the conclusion that hired labor on a farm, judiciously expended, will pay.

ACCESS TO GOOD MARKETS NECESSARY FOR AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT.

The *Telegraph* (St. John, N. B.) in advocating the proposed Baie Verte Canal, thus speaks of the injurious results of a want of ready and cheap communication with good markets for farm produce:—"While the Bay of Fundy territory has prospered and become wealthy and prosperous, the Gulf territory, with a far better soil and equal resources in all other respects, has, except in a few favored spots, retrograded. Its noble harbors are frequented by no fleets—no settlers are ever heard in its vast solitudes. Yet pioneers who have visited it within a few years say that it is an excellent timber region, and might be settled with advantage. It is admitted to have the best land and the best timber on that Island. The territory on the Bay Chaleur is another example of what isolation can do towards retarding a fair and fertile region. Though it has been settled upwards of 200 years, the whole territory on both sides of the Bay does not contain a population of more than 35,000, yet it has incomparable fisheries, a most fertile soil, splendid timber, a good climate, in fact everything except communication with proper markets; and without that, which the Baie Verte Canal alone can give, it must forever be in the background.

THE BARLEY CROP.

From a late circular issued by one of the foremost houses in Oswego, Messrs. Irwin & Sloan, we make the following extracts. The information conveyed by them may be looked upon as substantially accurate, as their means of obtaining intelligence from all parts of the Dominion are very extensive:—"That the average Western (States) barley does not vary materially from last year, the yield being somewhat smaller, and the grain, as a rule, of a brighter color, but not quite so heavy; the yield in this State, fully twenty five per cent. larger than last season, and of much handsomer quality; and the production in Canada not less than forty per cent. larger than last year, and of highly satisfactory quality. Considering carefully the various opinions expressed by our Canadian correspondents, we judge that 80c. to 85c. will be the range within which their markets will be likely to open. If this view should prove to be correct, we may look for first-class sales here (Oswego) to be made at \$1.20. It is our judgment, however, that these estimates are as likely to prove unjustified as the actual price as otherwise, and we hardly feel justified, therefore, in undertaking predictions so long before deliveries and actual transactions are likely to be made."

PLANTING TREES.

The subject of planting trees is one that now engages the attention, not only of agriculturists, but also of legislatures and statesmen in many parts of Europe. We read of extensive tracts of country being planted in Scotland, narrow as are its limits, and from several parts of the continent we have the same intelligence. As a preventative from malaria, in some places, trees are as profitable a product as the soil can yield; in others as a shade for crops and cattle from the excess of heat and cold, and to reclaim barren wastes, as in Holland, trees are planted by the thousands and tens of thousands. Beside the sea shore, in many instances, there are large tracts covered with loose sand, and quite useless to the agriculturist. One such region I knew myself where the sand was every year encroaching farther and deeper over the arable soil. There it was blown in by the west wind swept over the great Atlantic, and no means

then tried could arrest its devastating progress. On such waste tracts the work of planting trees is now being prosecuted with every prospect of favorable results. In Holland especially this is done. They first plant a marine bush which binds the sand, and then when the soil is by this means prepared, the common aspen or pine is planted. These were sand covered plains, but there are many waste corners and other places that might be planted with trees with a certainty of a large profit being raised in a few years. Young trees for planting are easily procured. Young trees from the outskirts of the woods, if taken up and planted carefully, seldom fail. In almost any place those who will can get them, and often where least expected. I have now young trees growing luxuriantly that I pulled up seedlings in the sand of the river where the seed had fallen, and lain in the water till in the season, the river needing a narrow channel, the sand became dry enough for the seed to grow.

ROOTS FOR STOCK FEEDING.

In Brittany the parsnip is becoming the favorite root for stock feed, and its culture is extending. In the Channel Islands this root forms a large portion of the fodder of the Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney cows, and much of their value as rich milkers is undoubtedly due to the use of this root for a long series of years. It is well known to physiologists, says the *N. Y. Tribune*, how great an effect upon the condition of a breed of animals is caused by a long period of careful feeding, and this is a conspicuous instance of it. This root in many parts of France is substituted for oats as feed for horses, 16 pounds a day being given with the best effect. For pigs it is also largely used, nine pounds of cooked roots being fed four times a day. One great advantage of this root is its hardness; the supply for spring may be left in the ground all winter, and is in the best condition to harvest at any time when needed.

THE ASPARAGUS BEETLE.

Every Spring I have to fight this beautiful little beetle in order to save my asparagus. The mature insect hides away in the ground, remaining there during the Winter, making its appearance early enough in the Spring to stick a few eggs to the first strong shoots that come through the rank, rich soil. Fowls will pick up many of the beetles if permitted to do so. Still many will escape, and the black, ugly-looking larva can usually be found upon the stalk a little later in the season. For several years I have prevented this insect from doing any considerable damage by the free use of lime scattered over the plants when wet with dew. This is easily applied and effectual, although, if one's neighbors do not join in the crusade, a new stock may visit you in Spring, and the successive broods remain all Summer if not destroyed.—*Rural New Yorker*.

HEN MANURE.

Hen manure is best used in compost with muck that is decomposed, say one part hen manure to two or three of muck. Never mix it till it is time to use it, and cover it soon after you drop it. It is a safe precaution to put a little hoe full of dirt between the hen manure and the seed corn, and drop it no faster than you cover it up. If in composting the muck contains much moisture, it will cause fermentation and set the ammonia free, by the development of the heat. A bushel of good hen manure has been known to produce ten tons of beets. Always save every ounce of hen manure. It is worth about as much as guano if it is properly saved and husbanded; that is, kept dry till it is to be used. It will benefit the corn crop to an extent almost equal in value to all the corn the hens will eat.—*Massachusetts Ploughman*.

THE HORSE FOR THE FARM.

In an article in the *New York Times*, Alexander Hyde says:—"The horse is a noble animal, and an indispensable adjunct to the farm, but a trotting horse, one of the 240 kind, in no sense belongs to the farm. No farmer can afford either to tend or use trotting horses, and when it is pretended that the animals are in favor of the breeding of superior animals it is all fudge. What the farmer wants, and what fairs should give premiums for, is a good family carriage or farm horse, worth \$200 or \$300; one that can draw a plow all day, and eat and sleep well at night; that can move on the road at the rate of five or six miles an hour for four or five consecutive hours without excessive fatigue. Speed is not the great criterion of a good horse, as the large premiums offered would seem to indicate. Neither the owner nor the spectator gains anything by this forced speed. It is a mere momentary spurt, and for its production an amount of training is required which no farmer can afford.

THE RED SPIDER ON PLANTS.

In hot parts the red spider is very troublesome to box edging, and indeed, other plants growing in the open air. Few have any idea of the enormous increase of the red spider in gardens, and the great amount of injury done by it. Thousands of plants set out in spring, dwindle or die outright at this season, and the loss is set down to many causes but the right one. The leaves are first dotted with yellow spots, which grow larger while the green grows smaller, and at last die away altogether. If they are taken in time the insects will not increase much; an occasional examination will soon show their existence in occasional instances, and these may be destroyed by rubbing the finger under the leaves; but when it becomes numerous, the syringe must be used to throw water slightly impregnated with coal oil, in and about the leaves. Just enough oil to give an odor to the water will do. There is danger that an overdose will injure many leaves, but it can do no more injury than the red spider will, and if you destroy the insect with the leaves, a new crop of leaves will come out, which will be clear of all encumbrance. It is worth a little unpleasant feeling to get rid of such mortgages on your capital stock. Not only flowers but evergreens are very liable to this red spider pest, and particularly the evergreen tree box, all of which must be treated in the same way. The water must, of course, be drawn up by the syringe from near the surface, as the oil will only float on the surface of the water. In this way there will be enough drawn up with each syringe-full to serve the desired purpose.—*Gardener's Monthly*.

A GREAT PLOWMAN.

The *Agricultural Gazette*, London, says.—On Saturday last, William Allan, one of the most noted and successful plowmen in Scotland, died suddenly at the Home Farm, Merryton, near Hamilton. For about twenty-five years he had been in the service of Mr. Lawrence Drew, and till Thursday was in ordinarily good health. He was then seized with inflammation, from which he died on Saturday. Allan was well known over Scotland, and especially in Lanarkshire, as a plowman, whom latterly none could excel. In 113 plowing matches in which he had been engaged, he carried off thirteen prizes in succession, and among the trophies gained at matches, most of which were open to all Scotland, he could boast of twenty-one medals, seven plows, a watch, and a great number of money prizes. He was a faithful and obliging servant to Mr. Drew, by whom he was much esteemed. He has died at the age of forty-five, leaving a widow and a family of seven children.

PARASITE OF THE POTATO BEETLE.

A correspondent of the *Hornesville Times* says:—"It may not be generally known that the Colorado potato bug has found its parasite, or a parasite has found the potato bug, if you prefer it that way. The parasite is oval shaped, about the length of the cucumber bug, and is marked on the back, from which it gets its name, 'the ten spot bug.' They have appeared in large numbers within the past few days, and are doing good service in destroying the eggs of the much-to-be-dreaded bug. I mention this so that those not personally acquainted with the Colorado bug, which is striped, may not, in destroying them, include this little benefactor; for I doubt not it will be to the potato bug what the ichneumon fly was to the weevil."

PRESERVING LABELS.

Thoroughly soak the pieces of wood of which they are made, in a strong solution of sulphate of iron; then lay them, after they are dry, in lime water. This causes the formation of sulphate of lime (a very insoluble salt) in the wood, and the rapid destruction of the labels by the weather is thus prevented. Bast, mats, twine and other substances used in tying or covering up trees and plants, when treated in the same manner, are similarly preserved. At a recent meeting of a horticultural society in Berlin, wooden labels thus treated were shown, which had been constantly exposed to the weather during two years without having been affected thereby.—*London Garden*.

A correspondent writes to the *Scientific American* that the worst toothache, or neuralgia coming from the teeth, may be speedily and delightfully ended by the application of a bit of clean cotton saturated in a strong solution of ammonia to the defective tooth. Sometimes the late sufferer is prompted to momentary nervous laughter by his application, but the pain has disappeared.



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