The Farm.

The Cow in October.

Last year an experiment was tried with one of my cows that dropped her calf on September 28 to see if uniform conditions of care would influence the yield of milk and prevent shrinking of yield. The cow was stabled every night and on chilly and stormy days and as winter gradually approached the stabling became more continuous, and by December 1 she was let out only on very warm days. The result was that at the end of six months the yield of milk had fallen off only three pounds. It is not here intimated that this would result the same for all cows, for cows are each to some extent built upon a plan of their own, but as to this particular cow we have never known her to milk so well in former seasons, and she has always been a winter cow. The lesson is that cows would do much better in the fall, especially the winter milkers, if they were given more uniform care as regards temperature and freedom from exposure, two months before going into winter quarters. The object of cowkeeping is to see how much milk can be got out of them, and too few men realize that comfort is a controlling factor in the matter. It is common in dairy districts to see the cows left out on cold, rainy and frosty nights, to get comfort out of fence-corners and spreading trees, and the wonder is why the cows shrink! Why should they not? Milk-giving and cold are antagonistic. Milk-giving is a maternal beneficence. Cold resistance is an expenditure of life force, and protection of the body is at the expense of all other demands. The cow, the moment she is compelled to defend her life from cold, calls upon all the forces, and the revenues which would otherwise go to milkmaking and the like are levied upon in proportion to the resistance required. The first curtailment is in the milk, and the next in the fats of the body; and if the care is poor and the feed is inadequate or of inferior quality, so that subsistence is limited, one sees the nearly dry cow poor and weak.

There is a lingering idea extant in some quarters that a cow must be toughened before winter by much exposure, or "she will be very tender and can't stand anything." This theory is held by the men who keep their spoiled and damaged hay until there comes a "sharp winter snap of cold weather," so as to feed it when the "cows' appetites are sharp," and who fail to see that the cows grow sharper and thinner over the lavish (?) foresight and generosity of their owner. Make the cow warm and comfortable. If the air is pure there is no more danger about a cow being in a warm stable than in a hot August pasture. It is not the warmth of a stable that is to be feared, but its unsanitary conditions. It is not heat or confinement that makes it unhealthy, but foul air, gases from fermenting masses of filth, and lack of suitable foods and of uniformity of care. This is the fault of the man, not of the principle. These men say they turn out their cows for exercise, and call it exercise for cows to crowd about the stable-door trying to get in where it is warmer—if not more comfortable otherwise than out of doors. Some men call exposure health-giving exercise when it is only a demand upon the cow to take part of her food to protect herself from an unnecessary attack of cold, which otherwise would have gone to flesh or milkmaking. So much food is lost; there is a shrinkage in milk, and not a grain in either health or vitality.

We plead here for a more considerate care of the fall dairy cow, whether she be in fall milk or fresh for the winter's work. She is a mother at any time, and needs that careful attention that should be accorded to all mothers—uniform warmth, succulent and sustaining foods fed with regularity and in such abundance that Nature may be properly sustained and the demands for milkmaking fully met. The cow has a place in the stable in the fall months, and the feeding should be so ordered that the cow should never know that winter has succeeded fall, either in feeding or in the stable life.—John Gould.

Points on Tomato Culture.

Having grown both, I find that the tomato vine is similar to the hop vine in regard to the use of the same ground every year. The longer either of them is raised on one kind of soil and in the same spot with good care the better it seems to thrive. This is something worth remembering, though, of course, it might not work in all cases, since the same plants often present striking differences even when grown on soils only a few rods apart.

I first select ground suitable for the purpose—such as can be employed year after year without any danger of interferences for other uses—and then, at an interval of about every ten feet, I drive strong stakes into the soil, arranging them in long rows two and a half feet apart. Along these rows the tomatoes are planted in hills, and as the vines commence to spread stout twine is run on nails from one stake to another, similar to wire on posts in the construction of a fence. On this twine the tomato vines are then trained, much in the same way that grapes are trained on a trellis. Thus arranged, the rays of the sun experience little or no difficulty in reaching all the tomatoes, and in consequence nearly every one of them ripens nicely and in due order, a thing that could not occur were the vines left to sprawl upon the ground. New tomatoes will keep coming on vines trained in this way much longer than they otherwise would, affording thereby just as many green ones in autumn for picklings as if only a small amount of ripe fruit had been realized during the entire season.

Should a drouth come on at any time during the summer, as there often does, the tomato hills ought to be watered properly, and all branches beginning to die pruned off so that no further vitality of the plant will be absorbed by them. In dealing thus with the vines they will keep green continually, and also produce fruit which commands a ready sale in any market and is a grace to any table. I consider it proper to prune considerably, and especially if large, fine tomatoes are to be produced. Pruning the vines will make them stocky, and for this reason the vitality of the plants will go into a less number of tomatoes. Therefore, if large fruit is desired, advantages can be derived by pruning heavily, but for general field culture there should be only a little pruning and sometimes almost none at all. The fact is, an ordinary plant properly trained will usually produce tomatoes plenty large enough for market without a great deal of pruning further than cutting off dead branches, and where the vines happened to be too thick.—Ohio Farmer.

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Making a Hotbed.

The fall is the time of year to prepare for the hotbed that is to be used in the spring. Frost is in the ground, and snow is likely to be upon it at the latter season of the year, making the proper institution of a hotbed almost an utter impossibility. Where a hotbed is to be used year after year it will be found profitable to make a good foundation, an excavation to the depth of eighteen inches, lined with stones. On this is set a box with sloping top of sash. The excavation can yearly be filled with horse manure and earth be placed on this, the earth having been taken in from the garden the previous fall. This not only gives a permanent hotbed, ready for use at any time, but the stone-lined excavation preserves all the heat, much of which is apt to be lost by the usual method of building a hotbed above the surface of the ground. Have the sashes hinged at the rear; then they will always stay in place and can readily be raised at the front, without danger of slipping, if the heat becomes too great within.

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Reports of shipping disasters on the English coast, continue to come in, and the east coast is strewn with wrecks. In most cases the crews have been saved, but upward of thirty persons have been drowned.