

HOME AND FARM.

This department of *The Critic* is devoted exclusively to the interests of the Farmers in the Maritime Provinces. Contributions upon Agricultural topics, or that in any way relate to Farm life, are cordially invited. Newsy notes of Farmers' gatherings or Grange meetings will be promptly inserted. Farmers' wives and daughters should make this department in *The Critic* a medium for the exchange of ideas on such matters as more directly affect them.

We deem it our especial duty to the honest and honorable packers of our great apple-growing districts, to draw particular attention to the facts embodied in a letter to the *Halifax Herald*, which appeared in its issue of the 29th ult., bearing the signature of Anton Tozer.

Mr. Tozer states that he bought a barrel of apples from Mr. Outhit a short time ago, and sent them to his brother in London. They were sold as "King of Tomkins." When opened, there were a few fine apples on the top, but all beneath were, though of fair size, not "King of Tomkins" at all, but apples of quite an inferior flavor and quality. As Mr. Tozer's brother had children, there was consumption for the apples, but the barrel was a palpable swindle. No blame is attributed to Mr. Outhit, who was no doubt himself the victim of an imposition of a very mean description.

But though the fraud is of a despicable nature, it is impossible to speak too strongly in condemnation of it, as calculated to engender distrust of a most valuable and important Nova Scotia industry.

CRANBERRIES—Believing the culture of the Cranberry to be well worth the careful attention of the Nova Scotia farmer, we append some information contained in an account of his experience in this line, by Mr. A. J. Burr, of Olympia, Washington Territory, where the soil and climatic influences are by no means dissimilar to those in many parts of our own Province:—

"In 1877, I planted three beds fifty feet square each of New Jersey vines. One bed I sanded six inches deep, one three inches, and the other on the natural peat. I took the sand out of the bottom of a creek that ran through my bog; it was pure white sand, but very fine. Those sanded six inches did not do well; the vines were puny, and the weeds choked them out. Those sanded three inches did much better, but were kept back by weeds. The vines planted on the natural bog have done much the best; they are stronger vines and less liable to be weedy.

The third year after planting I gathered three gallons of berries on the three beds; the fourth year I gathered two large sugar barrels full on the same ground; the fifth year I gathered on the natural bed, 50 by 47 feet, five barrels of 37 gallons each; and on the two sanded beds five barrels of the same size; making in all ten barrels or 370 gallons, which I sold for 75 cents per gallon, wholesale, amounting to \$227.50. I have never flooded these vines. In the winter season there is more or less water on them, but in the summer season the water is six or eight inches below the surface.

On my Oyster Bay bog I have out about six acres. This is a sag in the hills, with no large stream running into it. In the winter it is covered with water from six to eighteen inches. About the first of May I let the water off down below the surface, but not entirely off the bog, leaving it on the low places and ditches around the edges of the marsh.

I at first put out vines near the outlet, on well decayed peat. They grow thriftily, but do not bear well.

Near the middle of my bog is a pool of about one-eighth of an acre, with pond lillies and other water plants growing in it. The peat or moss near it is now and more spongy. This is where my vines are doing best and bearing best. I am transplanting from the decayed peat to the new peat. Although they grow splendid on the old peat, they do not bear well; they grow too thrifty. In the spring when the water is let off, it must be below the surface, as it will become warm and scald the vines and kill them. The new moss acts like a sponge, and retains all the moisture they require in the summer season.

When preparing the ground for planting, the top should all be taken off below the roots of all the vegetation, such as buck brush, wild tea, &c. In preparing my ground, I first dug a ditch through it nearly to the pond lily pool, draining it thoroughly. In August of the same year I burned it over by digging holes about thirty feet apart, and building hot fires in them with fir bark. In a few days they burned until they connected. They then milled along about two feet a day until I had about 12 acres cleared. It will burn as deep as vegetation goes, and no further.

In clearing this away you must not slash or cut the brush down in the least. As the fire mulls along the brush will fall over and help to keep it burning. Where the brush has been slashed it becomes dry, and will soon catch fire, and burn over the marsh. A surface burn is no good. After clearing in this way, rake over the ground with a garden rake, making it as even as an onion bed. Then force the vines into the muck about four inches with a wedge shaped dibble. Cut off a broom handle close to the broom, make a thin wedge of the small end, cut a crescent in the lower end, and you have an A I dibble.

Plant the vines about one foot apart each way. Plant any time from October to June. I consider the fall the best, as they will make root all the winter, and start off with vigor in the spring, thus making almost a year's difference in their growth.

You probably would like to know why I do not have more berries for sale. The reason is this: I have been cutting off my vines for sale, and to plant out myself; therefore I have but few vines bearing. I have this year five barrels of berries from vines that were cut off three years ago. I shall sell no more vines by the barrel, but will have a small lot of vines to sell by the thousand.

I send this with a sample jar of berries.

A. J. BURR

P. S.—The best piece of ground for cranberries I have seen in the Ter-

ritory is Mr. I. N. Wilcoxen's, on White River, under the hill back of Van Dorrin's. That kind of ground, put in proper shape, will raise fine berries.

A. J. BURR.

This letter is valuable in that it relates facts ("experience and incident") as to this important branch of agriculture.

H. JOHNSON.—You cannot restore rancid butter to a sweet good article. It may perhaps be a little improved by washing it first in new milk, and afterwards in cold water. A thorough washing in salt and water may do some little good, and yet another plan is to beat up a quarter-pound fresh lime in a pail of water, let it stand for an hour until any impurities have settled, then pour off the clear portion, and wash the butter with it. But care in the making is worth all doubtful remedies when the mischief is done.

It is not always the large hog that pays, but the one that makes the largest quantity of pork in the shortest time, and on the smallest amount of food. If a pig comes in during April he has nine months during which time to grow by the end of the year. If he is well bred, and from a good stock of hogs, he should easily be made to weigh 250 pounds during the nine months of his life.

Put a few lumps of rock salt into the manger, and leave them there for the horse to suck. Crib-biting is often produced by irritation of the stomach, which the salt will correct.

The wheat average per acre in Minnesota, U. S. A., is 12½ bushels; in Dakota, U. S. A., 15 bushels; and in Manitoba, Canada, 28 bushels.

John McOut, Stony Mountain, Manitoba, had 740 bushels of potatoes from one and a-half acres of land—or over 22 tons.

Jacob Lopppe, near Emerson, Man., took 904 bushels of wheat from nine acres of land.

A Brandon farmer has 12,000 bushels of oats from 200 acres.

OUR COSY CORNER

A SERVICEABLE SCRAP BASKET—Serviceable scrap baskets are made by adjusting a strip of matting to a round bottom of stiff pasteboard or wood. The place where the edge join is concealed by the trimmings, consisting of a large bow and many loops of ribbon. Do not line a scrap basket. It is unnecessary and the lining soils very easily.

Another on the same subject says differently as to lining, but as both look as though they might be useful and good, we insert them: A pretty receptacle for scraps, whether bag, basket or pail, is a necessary adjunct to a sewing room. Here is a description that requires very little time and skill for its construction. Select a small wooden pail, which on account of its weight is not as easily upset as a basket, and hence preferable. Paint or wash the outside with liquid bronze, or gild it, then line with silesia, red or blue or buff, depending on the other adornments of the room. Turn in the top an inch, and lay it in plait, fastening each one with a gilt headed nail. Cover the bottom with a plain piece, and fasten the lining carefully, deepening and carrying down each plait from the top. Paste a pretty scrap picture on the outside, or paint a spray of flowers. Tie a bow of ribbon on the handle, and you have a very fancy pail, which I am sure will be of great utility.

A very pretty and simple dress is of Gobelin blue cashmere, the plain skirt trimmed with a deep row of brown braiding of the sort that comes in patterns ready to be applied. The long curtain draperies are of the untrimmed cashmere, and the plain bisque bodice has the brown braid applied back and front in V shape, the collar and cuffs being also braided.

There is a strenuous effort being made by the milliners to introduce large bonnets and hats made of shirred and pleated velvet. All these hats and bonnets are of eccentric shape, and a few with bizarre tastes are encouraging the attempt to popularize them, but they are not neat and trim enough to suit the taste of those who dress with care, and they are not likely to have a long lease of favor.

Onions may be prepared without the usual accompaniment of tears by peeling them under water.

GREASY DISHCLOTHS.—Some physicians say diphtheria will result from using greasy dishcloths; "a word to the wise—"

Coachman coats of tan-colored livery cloth and large black felt hats are prettily worn together by blonde girls of eight or ten years, while for petite brunettes are long red coats, with towering high red felt hats with black ostrich plumes and black watered ribbon loops. Some of the newest large hats have the sides tied down over the ears by a ribbon passing over the crown.

The coachman's cloaks so much worn by children are long enough to conceal the dress beneath and are made double-breasted, with two large double box pleats in the back, with square pocket-flaps on the sides and a deep cape-like collar or else they have separate collars of fur, which may be black with either tan or red coats, or may be of beaver.

A pretty rest for a ba-que is formed of many rows of picot-edged ribbon, with the edges lapping over each other.