

PRACTICAL FARMING.

SAVING LABOR IN TILING.

With the continued low prices of farm products, it becomes necessary for farmers to economize wherever possible. The price of farm labor has not fallen in proportion to the price of farm products, hence the farmer is at a disadvantage. It has a tendency, says a writer, to discourage him and prevent him from making improvements, many of which would be very necessary and which he would very gladly make but for existing circumstances. The improvement of the soil by means of properly placed tile drains should be the last to be neglected. While it may not be advisable to go into debt as a rule, yet I have heard men say that they have made money by going into debt for tile drains. One of the principal items of expense in tiling is the cost of opening the ditch. With a little thought this can be reduced to a minimum. About one-half the hard labor usually done in laying tile is unnecessary; it can be done much cheaper by animal power and machinery. Expensive machinery for the digging of trenches is beyond the reach of most farmers, but such machinery is not absolutely necessary. A good ditching plow will not cost very much, and will save its cost every year on any farm where any great amount of tiling is done. With its use a farmer is likely to put in more tile than without. The work is made so much easier that he does not dread it, and so much more can be done in the same time. A common burning plow should be used first, and a couple of furrows turned to a good depth. Then follow in the same furrow with a ditching plow, using an extra long doubletree, which will permit the horses to walk clear of the furrow, one on each side. Having loosened it up, the labor of throwing it out is reduced one-half or more. After the loose ground has been thrown out, the ditching plow can be again used. The ditch should not be dug any wider than necessary. The extra width is all waste labor. For small tile, the bottom need not be any wider than necessary for a man to stand in, one foot in front of another. For large tile it must of course be wider, beginning at the top, as the sides are always more or less slanting. After the bottom has been properly graded, and the tile laid, a little ground should be thrown in; enough to cover and protect them from falling stones. The remainder of the ground can be thrown in with the burning plow. Set the beam as far to the "land" side as necessary to keep the horse clear of the ditch. Use one horse and with an assistant to manage the horse, the ditch can be filled very rapidly. After the filling is all in, barrow it thoroughly to level it. There may be situations where the directions cannot be applied. Sometimes the land is too swampy to take a team in with safety. Unless it is known to be solid enough, it is not wise to risk the team. Horses have been badly injured, even to breaking their limbs, by being driven into such places. Work can be saved by having the ditch ready for the tile before they are hauled. They can then be unloaded just where they are wanted, without any extra handling. When tiling is done at a time when there is danger of freezing, the ditch should not be finished any faster than the tile are laid, as the freezing will cause the sides to crumble and drop in, causing extra work.

IMPROVING DAIRY BUTTER.

One of the problems of particular importance to the dairy interests is that of improving the quality of butter made on a great many farms. Large quantities are made in this way and a great portion of it is of quite inferior quality. It is not remunerative to those who produce it, and it adversely affects the general market for good butter, because it is transformed into "ladies" and "process butter," which enter into competition with genuine butter, with much the same results as follow oleo-margarine competition. A good deal of the butter that is made might just as well, from the standpoint of the maker, of the industry, and of the consumer, not be made at all, since it does not pay any of them. If this butter could be improved in quality it would add largely to the value of the dairy product of the country and would help its makers to earn a living. Perhaps the most serious obstacle to improving the lower grade of dairy butter is the fact that the butter in rural districts that is made on the farm is so largely sold at groceries and general stores. The buyer is principally engaged in selling goods. He must hold his trade and he purchases farm butter as a mere incident to his business. He does not, and dare not, conduct this branch of it on its merits. He is glad enough to buy good farm butter if it comes to the store, and he will set it aside for his own use or for the use of good customers, but when the maker of poor butter brings in a batch, he is afraid to refuse it or to pay less for it than he did for the good butter. He knows that he would lose the trade of the maker if he did. One farmer's wife will make good butter, but what inducement has she to try to do still better when her neighbor, who makes poor butter, gets as much a pound for it as she does, or what motive has the maker of the poor butter to make it better when she gets just as much for it as is paid for the better butter?

made in the neighborhood? Human nature is so constituted that the doctrine of rewards and punishment cuts a large figure with it. On the average Sarcastic Traveling Man-Bell, for less it seems corresponding rewards for doing so. The quality of a large mass of farm butter would be very much improved if some way could be devised whereby every pound that is made were sold upon its actual merits, the good butter-maker receiving a good price, and the maker of grease, a grease price.

SWELLED LEGS IN HORSES.

During the forced confinement of young horses just being broken it is very common to find that several in the stable have their legs, the hind ones especially "stocked," as it is termed by horsemen, that is to say, swollen and round. At times they are hot and tender, while at other times they are "stocked," and there is no tenderness, the condition existing without any apparent inconvenience to the animal. In such cases there is some speculation about the cause at times, for the colts have not been overworked and they appear healthy, while some of them have their legs in good condition. When it is remembered that there are changes going on in the system, i.e., colthood, developing into adult life, dentition progressing, the temporary sucking teeth giving place to permanent ones, it can be easily understood that the system is liable to derangement, and the digestive organs are most susceptible to such derangements when the dental organs are implicated and the adjacent secretory glands. Exercise being limited or suspended adds to the trouble, as the effete materials have to be eliminated from the system through those imperfect excretories, the kidneys, so aptly termed by old pathologists the scavengers of the body. These organs becoming overtaxed fall also into derangement, and as a consequence we have the "filled legs" termed "stocked." Careful attention to dietary and the exhibition of salines occasionally will prevent such trouble in most cases, and can be supplemented by hand-rubbing of the extremities morning and evening, followed by bandaging. In bandaging, care is needed that the bandage is not too tight and that broad tape be used always, never string so that the blood vessels are pressed or the circulation through them interfered with, for when this is done, the swelling increases considerably. Moderate exercise must be given, and in a dry, sheltered yard, for exposure is bad. The system being excited, a chill is easily brought about. As to salines an ounce of the hypophosphate of soda twice a week in the drinking water is excellent as a preventive, but when the legs are stocked and all four are implicated, there is evidence that there is more amiss than the amateur can handle. The doctor is needed, that the legs may assume their healthy, flat shape again, and not remain filled or liable to refill on the slightest cause.

YOUR OLD SHOES.

Cast Them Upon the Market and They Will Return to You.

What do you do with your old shoes? Throw them into the ash barrel? If so, and you are wealthy enough to buy them, they will return to you. Different prices are paid for the shoes, according to the quality of leather they contain. Brogans are worth little if anything. A pair of fine calfskin boots bring as much as 15 cents. The boots and shoes are first soaked in several waters to get the dirt out of them. Then the nails and threads are removed, the leather ground up into a fine pulp, and it is ready to use. The embossed leather paperings, which have come into fashion lately, and the stamped leather fire screens are really nothing but thick paper covered with a layer of this pressed leather pulp. The finer the quality of the leather the better it takes the bronze and old gold and other expensive colors in the designs painted on them. Fashionable people think they are going back to medieval times when they have the walls of their libraries and dining rooms covered with embossed leather. They don't know that the shoes and boots which their neighbors threw into the ash barrel a month before form the beautiful material on their walls and on the screens that protect their eyes from the fire.

Old shoes could be had at smaller cost were it not for competing carriage houses, bookbinders and picture frame makers, who press the pulp into sheets and mold it according to their use. Bookbinders use them in making the cheaper forms of leather bindings, and the new style of leather frames with leather mats in them are entirely made of the cast-off covering of the feet.

SIBERIAN EXPLORERS.

Russia is beginning to honor her Siberian explorers. A statue is to be erected at Chabarowsk, on the Amur, of Deshnew, the Cossack, who went by sea in 1648 from the river Kolyma to the river Anadyr, thus sailing through Behring Strait for the first time, and proving that Asia was separated from America. It is proposed, moreover, to change the name of the East Cape into Cape Deshnew, which will probably be objected to by geographers.

ACCOMMODATING.

Tenant—That abominable chimney smokes so that we can't live with it. Landlord—All right, sir. I'll have it taken out at once.

YE OLDEN TIME WEDDINGS.

In the progress of time, marked changes have taken place in the customs connected with marriage, and it may therefore be interesting to record a few of the quaint customs and curious ceremonies pertaining to matrimony in the olden time.

In England it was not customary in early times to be married in the church, but at the church door. It was at the church door that Chaucer's Wife of Bath was wedded to the five husbands she survived:

She was a worthy woman all her live,
Husbands at the church dore had she five.

Edward the First, married Margaret, sister of the King of France, at the door of Canterbury Cathedral in September, 1299. The marriage of Francis the Second, with Marie Stuart, was also celebrated in this way at the door of Notre Dame de Paris.

The wine-drinking now done at the wedding feast, was formerly done in the church at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony. Pieces of cake were immersed in the wine and called sops. Shakespeare, in the "Taming of the Shrew," Act III, Scene 2, alludes to the practice:

After many ceremonies done,
He calls for wine—a health, quoth he,
as if

He had been aboard carousing to his mates
After a storm; quaffed off the muscadell,
And threw the sops all in the sexton's face.

Having no other reason
But that his beard grew thin and hungry;
And seemed to ask him sops as he was drinking.

Another custom at old-time weddings was that of strewing flowers from the residences of the bride and bridegroom to the church, as mentioned in an old ballad:

All hail to Hymen and his marriage day,
Strew flowers, and quickly come away,
Strew flowers, maidens; and ever as you strew,

Think one day, maidens, like will be done for you.

The use of bridesmaids at weddings dates from the earliest times. It was, at one period, the custom for the bridesmaid to escort the bridegroom to church, and for the bridegroom's men to conduct the bride. That this custom prevailed in some parts of England as late as the middle of the last century, we know from an old provincial poem, entitled "The Collier's Wedding," in which the following lines occur:

Two lusty lads, well dressed and strong
Stepped out to lead the bride along,
And two young maids of equal size,
As soon the bridegroom's hands surprise.

Knives were formerly part of the accoutrements of a bride. This may appear strange, but it is easily accounted for by the fact that, in olden times, it formed part of the dress for women to wear a knife sheathed and suspended from their girdles. In the "Witch of Edmonton"—1658—Somerton says: "But see, the bridegroom and the bride come; the new pair of Sheffield knives fitted both to one sheath." A bride says to her jealous husband, in Dekker's "Match Me in London"—1631:

See at my girdle hang my wedding knives?
With those despatch me.
In "Well Met, Gossip"—1675—the wife says:

In conscience I had twenty pair of gloves,
When I was a maid, given to that effect;

Garters, knives, purses, girdles, stores of rings,
And many a thousand dainty, pretty things.

The distribution of gloves at weddings was, in former times, a common custom. Ben Johnson, in the "Silent Woman"—1609—refers to the practice:

We see no ensigns of a wedding here,
No character of a bridal;
Where be our scarves and our gloves?

It is also alluded to in Herrick's "Hesperides"—1634:

What posies for our wedding-rings,
What gloves we'll give and ribanings!

Rings, too, appear to have been formerly given away at weddings. Anthony Wood relates of Edward Kelly, a "famous philosopher" in Queen Elizabeth's time, that "Kelly, who was openly professed beyond the modest limits of a sober philosopher, did give away in gold wire rings—or rings twisted with three gold wires—at the marriage of one of his maidservants, to the value of four thousand pounds.

Rosemary, the symbol of remembrance and fidelity, was anciently worn at weddings, and old plays frequently mention the use of the herb on these occasions. In drinking the health of a newly married pair, it was customary for each guest to dip his sprig of rosemary in the cup. Thus one of the characters in the old play of "The City Madam" says:

Before we divide
Our army, let us dip our rosemaries
In one rich bowl of sack, to this brave girl,
And to the gentleman.

The wedding-cake was, in days gone by, broken over the head of the bride, and then thrown among the guests.

Smollet in his "Expedition of Humphrey Clinker,"—1771—described how Mrs. Tabitha Lammhage's wedding-cake was broken over her head, and its fragments distributed among the bystanders, who imagined that to eat one of the hallowed pieces would ensure the unmarried eater the delight of seeing his vision of the person to be his wife or her husband. Many other divinations were practiced by means of wedding-cake, one of the most popular being that of passing slices of it through the wedding-ring, and then distributing them among the friends, to be carefully preserved to dream upon under the following conditions:

Fast any Friday in the year,
When Venus mounts the starry sphere,
Thrust this at night in pillow beer;
Then in morning slumbers you will seem

To see your lover in a dream.

That the ingredients of a wedding cake in the seventeenth century did not differ materially from one at the present day may be gathered from the following lines in Herrick's "Hesperides":

This day, my Julia, thou must make
For mistress bride the wedding cake;
Knead but the dough, and it will be
To paste of almonds turned by three;
Or kiss it thou but once or twice,
And for the bride-cake there'll be spice.

"Flinging the stocking," was an old custom on the bridal eve. In Fletcher's "Poems"—1650—it is thus alluded to:

This clutter ore, Clarinda lay
Half-bedded, like the peeping day,
Behind Olympus' cap;
While at her head each twitt'ring girl
The fatal stocking quick did whirl
To know the lucky hap.

Mission, a French traveller in England during the reign of William the Third, explains this venture for luck as follows: "The young men took the bride's stockings, and the girls those of the bridegroom, each of whom, sitting at the foot of the bed, threw the stocking over their heads, endeavoring to make it fall upon that of the bride or her spouse; if the bridegroom's stockings, thrown by the girls, fell upon the bridegroom's head, it was a sign that they themselves would soon be married; and similar luck was derived from the falling of the bride's stockings, thrown by the young men."

In pre-Reformation days, candidates for connubiality were obliged to study times and seasons. The Church forbade marriages to be celebrated between the first Sunday in Advent and Hilary Day; between Septuagesima Sunday and Low Sunday; and between Rogation Sunday and Trinity Sunday. Some old verses run thus:

Advent marriage doth deny,
But Hilary gives thee liberty;
Septuagesima says thee nay,
Eight days from Easter says you may;
Rogation bids thee to refrain,
But Trinity sets thee free again.

It was considered improper to marry upon Holy Innocent's Day, because it commemorated the slaughter of the children by Herod; and it was equally wrong to wed upon St. Joseph's Day—March nineteenth.

Much importance too, was attached by our ancestors to the day of the week on which the marriage should be performed. An old rhyme tells us:

Monday for wealth,
Tuesday for health,
Wednesday the best day of all;
Thursday for losses,
Friday for crosses,
Saturday no luck at all.

In Shakespeare's time, Sunday was considered the most auspicious day for the ceremony. In the "Taming of the Shrew," Petruchio, after telling his future father-in-law "that upon Sunday is the wedding-day," says:

Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu;
I will to Venice; Sunday comes apace;
We will have rings, and things, and
fine array;
And, kiss me, Kate, we will be married
on Sunday.

ROYAL BEDS.

From a mere child the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg has been most particular about her beds, and when she first came to England Her Royal Highness was much chaffed about this weakness by members of the royal family. The Queen, however, who is also most particular about her beds, took her daughter-in-law's part, and, although now the sheets are no longer sewn down to the mattress, they are composed of the most exquisitely fine linen that can be produced, and stretched like a tight rope over the most perfect mattresses that can be manufactured in Paris, in which capital the making of mattresses has been brought to a fine art.

Another royal lady who quite agrees with the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg as to the fitness of her linen, and the tightness of drawing the sheets, is the Empress Eugenie. And Her Imperial Highness has an odd fancy to have her bed so low as to give a visitor to the imperial chamber the impression that she sleeps almost on the floor. It is elevated scarcely more than a foot, as all who have visited, in old days, the private apartments of St. Cloud, Compiègne and the Tuilleries, will remember.

HOT CROSS BUNS.

One quart of milk, twelve ounces of butter, one pound sugar, one fourth of an ounce of mixed spice, two eggs, two ounces of German yeast, four pounds of flour. Make the milk slightly warm, put in a pan with half the sugar, six ounces of flour, the yeast and eggs mixed together, and cover down in a warm place to rise. When risen with a frothy head and again fallen and become almost flat it is ready for the remainder of the ingredients to be mixed with it. The butter should be rubbed in the rest of the flour and mixed together into a mellow dough. Bake in a quick oven.

HEALTH.

NATURAL COSMETICS.

Why will perverse woman spend so much time, money and nervous force in producing white-washed and hand-painted complexions, when nature offers her the genuine article without money and without price. If our pet rose begins to droop and fade and the once bright blossoms to wither and die, we don't run and get a little pot of colors and daub it up to restore its former beauty. Yet this is what women do, in effect, when they begin to fade. What we do to the rose is to prune it tenderly, give it plenty of sun and water, and fresh air and wait developments.

One of nature's ingredients toward a fine complexion is ozone—fresh, new air, both sleeping and waking. Breathing second-hand, stale air is injurious to the purest complexion. Few women pay enough attention to this matter. They are choice and dainty in the soaps, and creams, and lotions they use, but seem to think, "any old" air will answer their purpose.

Another essential cosmetic is water—not a daub with a sponge, but a liberal dose, which leaves the skin afterward fresh and glowing. We would see fewer dingy complexions if frequent, vigorous baths would take the place of the powder box.

Exercise is another potent factor in complexion building. Brisk walking, riding, wheeling, gardening—every sweeping are royal roads to beauty. Everything that will bring the muscles into active play and start the blood to circulating freely will be found to be an excellent tonic.

Sleep taken at regular intervals is very beneficial to the fading complexion. Being stingy in sleep invites wrinkles and while "Early to bed," etc., may fall short of making one "healthy, wealthy, and wise," it is a very reliable beauty maxim.

One should never wash the face just before going out into the open air, or if it is necessary to do so, always use cold water and rub the face vigorously. We will give a few of nature's cosmetics, which, if used judiciously, will be found very beneficial in preserving the complexion, but we must be careful not to break any of nature's laws if we would have a really fine complexion.

Almonds will be found very soothing to the skin, and some use crushed almonds instead of soap for their faces and hands, to keep them also may be rubbed into the skin at night and will be found better than cold cream, but it must be pure oil of almonds, and not a mere imitation. As for the so-called almond soap, it is very rare that the almond has any part in it. It somewhat resembles almond in its odor, but this comes from benzoin, which is taken from tar oil and other substances not injurious to the skin, but not so beneficial as real almond powder, "a nut quality" of which forms a paste in the water and is a splendid beautifier.

Benzoin is a genuine cosmetic of nature. It is the gum of the benzoin tree. The best benzoin comes from Siam. It is the frankincense of the Jews and the incense of Roman Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, etc. The Chinese fumigate their houses with it, and owing to its grateful perfume, vanilla pomade and pastilles are superior. A few drops added to water makes what is called "virgin milk," which, used as a lotion, keeps the skin wonderfully soft and fair and prevents premature wrinkles.

Cucumber is another of nature's own cosmetics. During the summer never throw away cucumber peelings. Boil them and boil the water and use it for the toilet. A slice of cucumber may be used instead of soap with very satisfactory results. Dill water is as good as rose water for the complexion, and for some skins is perhaps better, it makes the skin paler.

Still another beautifier is the elder-flower, famous for its cooling qualities. It makes an exquisite wash for the face and an excellent oil for the hair. Lavender is not precisely a cosmetic, yet a few drops in the toilet water is very refreshing. The hygienic virtues of lavender are well known.

Cedar wood in powder or as a tincture is excellent for the teeth, and imparts an agreeable perfume to the breath.

All spices are air purifiers and air coolers. It is a fact that very few epidemics visit places filled with perfumes of spices—cloves, mace, cinnamon, etc. A room perfumed with spices and eucalyptus remains cool on the hottest summer day, and defies disease resulting from impure air.

There is no better antiseptic in nature than musk—real musk, of course. The Chinese use it to dye their hair and eyebrows.

SHAMPOO FOR DANDRUFF.

A receipt for a shampoo that can be easily prepared is as follows: "Melt one cake of olive oil soap in a quart of boiling water, add a tablespoonful of washing soda, and let the mixture stand. It will form a jelly. For each shampoo take a good tablespoonful of the jelly, added to a cup of warm water and a few drops of ammonia. Before applying the shampoo wet the head thoroughly with clear warm water, and then rub the mixture well into the scalp, after which rinse the head in plenty of warm water, taking care to wash out all the soap. This will leave the head thoroughly clean and free from dandruff."