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RURAL NOTES.

SALT is one of the best of all solvents of plant food, and therefore it is a sensible thing to sow the manure heap with salt. But unless the heap is under cover the salt should not be applied until the manure is ready to be drawn to the fields.

It pays better to grow 200 bushels of potatoes per acre and sell them at 25 cents, than seventy-five bushels per acre and sell them at 50 cents. And on most lands there is no reason why, with proper manuring and cultivation, a crop of 200 bushels per acre should not be easily grown.

A dairy bull with points is well enough in his way, but we prefer a beast with a record. A Jersey bull of one of the foremost families, in his native isle was sold three years ago for \$3,200, but because his daughters are poor butter producers he was knocked down last summer for \$140.

TURNIPS, when fed to milch cows a short time before milking are almost sure to flavour the milk. For this reason many dairymen prefer to feed beets and mangolds, and considering how cheaply mangolds can be raised it is not surprising that they should be steadily growing in favour.

CHURNING in winter is often a difficult and troublesome task, owing to the low temperature of the cream. The churn may be worked in vain unless the cream is warmed to the proper temperature, and in order to know when work may begin with a hope of success a thermometer is almost indispensable.

OWING to the extreme drouth of 1883, which by cutting off feed destroyed many millions of sheep, the wool crop of Australia last year was 80,000,000 pounds short. Yet such is the overstocked condition of the woollen goods trade that the shortage had scarcely any effect on the wool markets of America.

THE fat stock show of the Provincial Agricultural Association was held this year at Guelph, in the heart of the best feeding district of the Province. The number of fat cattle exhibited was not so large as last year, but the animals were of superior quality and good judges were unanimous in expressing admiration of them. The display of fat poultry, dressed, was also remarkably good.

DR. THOMAS TAYLOR of the United States Department of Agriculture, has found sulphuric acid to be one of the best of all tests for oleomargarine. A few drops on a small quantity of pure butter will first change the butter to an opaque whitish yellow colour, but after the lapse of ten minutes it will turn to a brick red. Oleomargarine of beef fat when treated in the same way changes first to a clear amber, and in about twenty minutes to a deep crimson.

A FEW cents a month spent in paying for an agricultural paper will often give us information worth many dollars. The most intelligent and observant farmers in the country are regular contributors to the farm journals, and the value of the

experience of such men to their brother farmers can hardly be computed in money. It is a common thing to sneer at book farming, but there is a great deal of useful knowledge in books and newspapers which costs little and is worth a great deal.

CATTLE housed in warm but well-ventilated stables will thrive on much less food than they possibly could in cold ones, and cows especially require warm quarters. The dairyman who would at the same time diminish the supply of fodder and increase the milk product must have a careful eye to the comfort of his cows. A few dollars expended for lumber and labour in double-boarding a stable would be repaid in the economy of food and the increased milk product in the course of one season.

To get hens to lay in winter it is desirable that they should be kept in warm quarters and that plenty of nourishing food of the right quality should be provided. It is a mistake, however, to make life too easy for the hens. They should be made to work for their living hard enough to give them bodily exercise, otherwise their health will become impaired and the laying of its eggs can't be looked for. In every instance the food should be supplied them in the scratching heap, among straw, chaff, gravel, etc., or if an exception be made it should be with the evening meal. Whoever knows the price of eggs in winter need not be reminded of the profit which lies in the proper care of hens.

CANADIAN exporters of apples should endeavour to establish a commission house in Liverpool, where all Canadian apples could be sorted and then placed for examination and sale. English consumers know the value of Canadian apples now, but they are so often imposed upon by the shippers from other countries, and even by the carelessness of the packers of Canadian apples, that some such prevention as we have mentioned appears to be necessary. One of the recent causes of complaint is that apples shipped from Canada have been very poorly packed—sufficient allowance not having been made for shrinkage—and the consequence is that the fruit is bruised and injured in the passage. With a commission house in England for re-sorting this evil might be speedily cured.

THE winter months cannot be better employed for the peace of the household than by laying up a good store of wood for the year. A year's supply, cut, split and piled under cover, will keep the women folks in good humour day in and day out, and how much this means no farmer requires to be told. We have actually known instances in which the farmer was called from his harvest field to cut the wood needed for cooking his dinner. Such gross neglect deserves to be punished with a compulsory fast, and perhaps no better punishment could be meted out to such a farmer than to let him go without a dinner now and then. The most economical way of providing fuel is to cut it and put it under cover during the comparatively slack time of winter, and a year's supply so laid up gives a feeling of comfort and security equal to money in the bank.

THE pure-bred Shorthorn steer, Clarence Kirk-livington, bred at the Bow Park farm, has left a splendid record as a prize winner at fat stock shows. He was dropped February 1st, 1881, and at the Chicago show of 1882, when 615 days old, his weight was 1,620 pounds; at the show of 1883, when 1,009 days old, his weight was 2,045 pounds; and at the show of this year, when 1,972 days old, his weight was 2,400 pounds. He won the first prize in his class as a yearling, took first honours in four classes as a two-year-old; and at the late show took the sweepstakes' prize for Shorthorns, the grand sweepstakes as best animal in the show, and when slaughtered the sweepstakes for the best carcass. As an instance of early maturity the record of this animal is deserving of study, for a breed that can be brought up to 1,600 or 1,800 pounds in two years is the one that feeders will favour.

THE *Boston Cultivator* makes some sensible suggestions on the buying of fruit trees, and now that agents are busily beating the country for orders, farmers require to be on guard. Here is what the *Cultivator* says:—1. Buy of responsible dealers of whom you may expect to get trees just as they are represented, and true to name. 2. Other things being equal, it is better to buy of nurseries nearest your own home to save cost and dangers of transportation and to secure trees grown in your own climate. 3. Select crown-grafted or budded trees in preference to root-grafted trees. 4. Do not buy second-class trees; they are nearly always more expensive in the end. 5. Do not purchase too old or too large trees. A peach tree one year from the bud, an apple or pear one or two years, are preferable to trees twice as old. 6. Do not purchase too many varieties. Five varieties are worth more than twenty. 7. Be sure before making your selections that your varieties are adapted to your climate and to your wants.

A WRITER in one of our exchanges makes the following sensible remarks on a subject that farmers do not think upon as often or as seriously as they should: "You may have fine cattle, pigs and poultry that you can justly be proud of, but do not compel your wife and children to live with them. Do not force them to have a pig-sty so near the house that they must see the dirt and smell the offensive odours as soon as a door is opened, or a window lifted for fresh air. Do not bring up your children to make play-mates of your pigs, and to spend a good share of their time in keeping them and the chickens off your front door step. Such surroundings are not calculated to inculcate habits of order and cleanliness, and I doubt if they can leave pleasant memories of home in the minds of such children when they shall have become men and women. I beg of you, banish all this disorder and unpleasantness to a suitable distance from your dwelling, put up one of the inexpensive but effective fences now in use, and then plant a hedge to screen the barn and yards from view." The man who will put the above in his pipe to smoke it—providing he is one who needs the prescription—cannot fail to soon learn that he has made an important and valuable discovery.